United Nations A/73/281

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 74 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 36/151 and 70/146. It describes the activities undertaken by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, in particular the outcome of the forty-seventh session of the Fund's Board of Trustees.

* A/73/150.

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I. Introduction

A. Submission of the report

1. The present report was prepared in accordance with the arrangements approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/151, by which it established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. It presents the activities undertaken by the Fund, in particular the outcomes of the forty-seventh session of the Board of Trustees, held in Geneva from 9 to 13 April 2018. The present report complements the report on the activities of the fund submitted to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh session (A/HRC/37/20), in December 2017.

B. Mandate of the Fund

2. The Fund receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals. In accordance with its mandate and the practice established by its Board of Trustees, the Fund provides grants to established channels of assistance, including non-governmental organizations, associations of victims and members of their families, private and public hospitals, legal clinics, public interest law firms and individual lawyers, that submit project proposals involving medical, psychological, social, financial, legal, humanitarian and other forms of direct assistance to victims of torture and members of their families.

C. Administration of the Fund and Board of Trustees

3. The Secretary-General administers the Fund through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with the advice of the Board of Trustees, which is composed of five members acting in their personal capacity and appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard to equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with their Governments. The Board is currently composed of Sara Hossain (Bangladesh), Lawrence Mute (Kenya), Vivienne Nathanson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Gaby Oré Aguilar (Peru) and Mikołaj Pietrzak, Chair (Poland).

II. Forty-seventh session of the Board of Trustees

4. The forty-seventh session of the Board, held in Geneva from 9 to 13 April 2018, was chaired by Mikołaj Pietrzak. The agenda covered three main issues: knowledge-sharing in the field of rehabilitation of torture victims, strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders and working methods of the Fund.

A. Knowledge-sharing

Expert workshop on the theme "Seeking justice for torture: a victim-centred approach"

5. The Board of Trustees convened an expert workshop in Geneva on 11 and 12 April 2018 to discuss current challenges in the context of seeking justice for torture. The workshop brought together 20 professionals from various backgrounds (medical, psychological, social and legal) from rehabilitation centres financially supported by the Fund (see annex).

6. The workshop was part of the annual series of thematic discussions, initiated by the Board in 2014 with the aim of collecting and disseminating expertise on redress and rehabilitation of victims of torture. Annual thematic workshops gather victims, human rights defenders and practitioners from projects supported by the Fund to share best practices and identify effective responses to the most pressing challenges confronting torture survivors today. The workshops also serve as a platform to display the concrete impact of the Fund's work, bringing forward voices and testimonies on the incidence of torture and the importance of rehabilitation for victims and their families.

7. Before the workshop, on 11 April 2018, the Board hosted a high-level public panel on the same subject. In the context of the commemorations of the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, panellists shared their views and experiences in the field of redress for victims of torture since the affirmation of the legal principle of the absolute prohibition of torture. Representatives from civil society also shared poignant testimonies on the difference made by the Fund for their programmes aimed at seeking justice for victims and their families. The high-level panel included the following: Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; Carsten Staur, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations in Geneva; Jens Modvig, Chair of the Committee against Torture; Rupert Skilbeck, Director of REDRESS; Estela de Carlotto, Co-Founder and President of the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo; Hassan Bility, torture survivor and Director of the Global Justice and Research Project.

8. The workshop consisted of three working sessions focusing on litigation, specific groups and interdisciplinary assistance in the legal process. They were each followed by an interactive discussion. The framework for the discussion was the right to redress and the centrality of victims in securing redress. The workshop discussions are summarized in a report available on the Fund's website.[1] Full statements from all panellists are also available on the website.

9. The main recommendations and findings of the workshop were as follows:

Litigation and developments in the legal framework for justice

(a) Criminal proceedings before domestic courts, if available, should be pursued as a first step to judicial remedy;

(b) Universal jurisdiction can be used to trigger an international arrest warrant, and to prove that there is a prima facie basis for a case, which could prompt arrests of additional perpetrators and help bring justice forward;

(c) Litigation should focus on the specific needs of victims, not only on the merits of the case. The role of the victims before, during and after the process of seeking justice is central to any litigation process. The victims need to understand the theory of the case, participate in building the case and be made aware of any limitations of their case;

(d) It is necessary to ensure security and protection for victims and human rights defenders as well as legal actors, such as judges, who work on bringing justice for torture. Fear of retaliation can be barriers to the pursuit of justice;

(e) In addition to criminal penalties, or in jurisdictions where those are not obtainable, redress should aim at monetary satisfaction, granting of medical and

[1] See www.ohchr.org/torturefund.

psychological assistance, measures of non-repetition, and/or changes in legislation or policy;

(f) In addition to monetary remedies, civil litigation may have an implied deterrent effect, provide legal precedent and lead to changes in legislation and policy;

(g) Communications and outreach, including through the media, should be used to promote solidarity with victims and human rights defenders, raise awareness of victims' rights and the remedies that can be pursued, and promote changes in legislation and policy;

(h) The Fund should facilitate contact between organizations in order to share best practices and build common approaches in the litigation of torture cases;

Needs of specific groups

(i) Victims of torture may experience discrimination on multiple grounds (e.g., gender, disability, political affiliation); thus, it is important to seek redress and remedy through an intersectional approach;

(j) Certain victims, for example, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, may face stigma as a result of the crimes committed against them and need targeted support to encourage the reporting of violations and subsequent testimony;

(k) When working with children, additional care should be taken to explain the case in a way that it can be understood by the child. Child victims may need additional assistance to express themselves during their testimonies. Extra time and care may also be needed from practitioners and lawyers when supporting victims with disabilities;

(l) Since many victims suffer torture due to discriminatory laws or practices, advocacy and awareness-raising on combatting discrimination are important in preventing future cases of torture;

(m) Many victims of torture, for example, rural populations and indigenous peoples, lack influence and resources and are marginalized in their countries. Strengthening local institutions, including by providing services in local languages, could make it easier for them to speak with professionals who can educate them about their rights and how to assert them;

(n) Reasonable accommodation should be available to help victims' access to justice. For example, persons with disabilities may need interpretation services or physical support to participate in cases;

(o) The impact of torture often extends beyond the victims and onto families, communities, and future generations (for example, children born out of sexual violence). To be truly rehabilitative, remedies need to be broader, including the creation of memorials or commemorations to promote public solidarity with victims;

Interdisciplinary assistance in the legal process

(p) Psychosocial support should be available for victims before the legal process begins in order to prevent retraumatization;

(q) Collaboration between partner organizations from different countries and fields, such as medical professionals and forensic doctors, is conducive to a more holistic approach in terms of support, ensuring that medical injuries are properly documented and that victims pursuing legal remedies also have access to psychosocial assistance;

(r) Burnout of staff working with victims of torture should not be ignored and rehabilitative services for rehabilitation staff should be made available;

(s) Security for human rights defenders and members of the media is also a necessary consideration since retaliation against these individuals may hamper the judicial process and discourage victims and practitioners from bringing cases to justice;

(t) Psychosocial services can play an instrumental role, not only in helping victims of torture handle the impact of preparing for testimony, but also in managing expectations with regard to the length of the legal process and the outcomes attainable through litigation;

(u) Medical assistance is necessary, not only to ensure that victims are physically able to testify, but also to document the evidence of torture. Perpetrators in some contexts have learned how to torture without leaving scars or marks, but a trained medical professional may be able to identify evidence of torture even years after the crime has been committed;

(v) The victim's livelihood should also be considered as victims often need financial assistance, including in the form of vocational training and/or education, to help them reintegrate into society and find stability;

(w) A goal-setting model, which serves to identify the victim's short-, medium- and long-term objectives, can help practitioners determine what services are most needed by the victim;

(x) Practitioners need to build trust with victims, including by having empathy with their reality and listening to their opinions and preferences when designing legal strategies. The interests of the victim should be the priority, and lawyers should not treat the other aspects of rehabilitation as merely transactional.

10. The Board recommended that this knowledge-sharing programme continue and that, each year, a topic relevant to the issue of redress and rehabilitation of victims of torture be chosen. The Board also recommended the creation of a web-based platform to facilitate contact between practitioners and specialized civil society actors operating in different regions and countries in support of victims of torture and their families.

B. Strategic partnerships

11. On 10 April 2018, the Board convened a meeting with leading anti-torture non-governmental organizations, including the Association for the Prevention of Torture, World Organisation Against Torture, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims and Amnesty International, to discuss contemporary challenges in relation to anti-torture advocacy and the provision of rehabilitation services. Organizations encouraged the Fund to shape and disseminate a victim-centred narrative and increase outreach and support in places where the space for civil society is increasingly challenged. The Board recommended including meetings with leading anti-torture non-governmental organizations as a regular item on its session agenda.

12. On 13 April 2018, the Board held a consultative meeting with Member States to provide an update on the activities and prospects of the Fund. A number of States, including Argentina, Austria, Chile, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, expressed interest in the establishment of a "Group of Friends" of the Fund. A number of delegations were

appreciative of the Fund's efforts towards increased outreach and powerful storytelling and encourage the Fund to further disseminate its tangible achievements.

C. Working methods of the Fund

13. The Board reviewed working methods of the Fund against the targets underpinning the mission statement adopted in 2014. The Board notably recommended the development of a lighter application process for grantee organizations seeking yearly renewal of the financial support from the Fund.

14. The Board took stock of an ongoing mapping exercise undertaken by the secretariats of relevant grant-making entities in support of victim-focused programmes. The Board recommended the organization of a meeting at its next session with relevant United Nations mechanisms operating with a victim-centred mandate, including the recently appointed victims' rights advocate to share information with a view to maximizing the use of available resources for the delivery of assistance to victims and their families.

III. Cooperation with the Committee against Torture

15. On 7 May 2018, the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Fund met with the Committee against Torture. Meetings between the two mechanisms have now become an annual feature in the agenda of the Committee. The Chair briefed the Committee on the Fund's activities and expressed appreciation for the growing cooperation between all anti-torture mechanisms of the United Nations.

IV. United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

16. On 26 June 2018, a compelling joint statement was issued by all anti-torture mechanisms of the United Nations, notably the Committee against Torture, the subcommittee on the prevention of torture, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the Board of Trustees of the Fund. For the first time, regional mechanisms from Africa, Europe and the Americas, namely, the Committee on the Prevention of Torture in Africa, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment joined this important advocacy initiative.

17. The joint statement highlighted the progress made over the past 70 years towards the eradication of torture. Since the landmark adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ban on torture and other ill-treatment has been incorporated into a large number of international and regional human rights treaties. The prohibition of torture has been elevated to jus cogens, thus recognizing that it is so fundamental that it supersedes all treaties and customary laws. The use of torture has been criminalised in a number of national legislations, accountability for the acts of torture has been incorporated into many penal codes and the universality of jurisdiction over acts of torture has been accepted. A system of regular visits by independent international and national mechanisms to places where people are deprived of their liberty has been established to help prevent torture and other ill-treatment.

18. Notwithstanding these achievements, the signatories denounced the continued use of torture, associated high rates of impunity and the increasing resort to torture,

especially in the context of the fight against terrorism. With one voice, they called for all acts of torture to be prosecuted effectively and for more action to be taken to prevent the recurrence of such acts. They also recalled that under international law, victims of torture have an enforceable right to effective remedy, including redress and rehabilitation and called upon States to renew efforts to fulfil the solemn promise of the Universal Declaration, namely, a torture-free world for all.

19. In a statement issued on the same day, the Secretary-General recalled, in strong terms, that torture was unacceptable and unjustified at all times, including during states of emergency, political instability and even war.

20. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a strong video appeal, disseminated via social media. In particular, he noted the decades that it took to restore human beings broken by the effects of torture. The High Commissioner underscored the critical role played by the United Nations Voluntary Fund in helping victims and their families, thus restoring a sense of humanity in affected communities.

21. To encourage other stakeholders to stand up against torture on the International Day, the Fund produced a number of short videos relaying stories of victims and practitioners. The Fund also launched its first edition of the UNVFVT Quarterly, a new initiative to share information with the anti-torture community, the Fund's friends and partners on upcoming events and meetings of United Nations anti-torture mechanisms and stories on progress made towards the eradication of torture and assistance for survivors.

V. Financial situation of the Fund

22. In 2017, the Fund received voluntary contributions totalling nearly $8.4 million. In 2015 and 2014, the voluntary contributions exceeded $9 million.

Contributions received from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017

Donor	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date of receipt*
States		
Austria	16 797	12 June 2017
Canada	45 112	19 April 2017
Chile	5 000	15 March 2017
Czechia	9 164	15 September 2017
Denmark	428 877	24 February 2017
France	21 231	25 April 2017
Germany	447 928	28 June 2017
Germany	202 132	13 December 2017
India	25 000	26 January 2017
Ireland	91 299	11 April 2017
Italy	32 017	28 March 2017
Italy	11 947	26 January 2018
Kuwait	10 000	1 April 2017
Liechtenstein	25 100	9 May 2017
Luxembourg	17 688	24 October 2017
Norway	100 876	4 August 2017
Peru	1 482	23 March 2017

Donor	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date of receipt*
Saudi Arabia	75 000	26 May 2017
South Africa	5 536	30 March 2017
Sri Lanka	5 000	19 January 2017
Switzerland	203 252	11 December 2017
Turkey	10 000	12 September 2017
United States of America	6 550 000	23 October 2017
Individual donors	309	
Total	**8 339 630**	

23. The Board of Trustees of the Fund expects its income to reach the $9 million mark in 2018. The requests for assistance received under the call for applications for 2019 amount to a record-high of $13.6 million.

VI. How to make a contribution to the Fund

24. Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities can contribute to the Fund. For more information about the Fund and how to contribute, donors are requested to contact the secretariat of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, CH 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; e-mail: unvfvt@ohchr.org; telephone: 41 22 917 9624; fax: 41 22 917 9017.

25. Donations can also be made online at http://donatenow.ohchr.org/torture. Information on the Fund can be found at www.ohchr.org/torturefund.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

26. **The Fund continues to play an indispensable supporting role to scores of organizations providing specialized and unique assistance to victims of torture.**

27. **The interest generated by the yearly thematic workshops, convened by the Fund, is proof of the need for knowledge-sharing in the field of rehabilitation of victims of torture. The thematic workshop was particularly effective with regard to identifying victim-focused best practices in the context of seeking justice for torture acts.**

28. **The Secretary-General urges Member States and other stakeholders to support the Fund, noting that contributions are a concrete manifestation of the commitment of States to the elimination of torture, in line with the Convention against Torture, in particular article 14 thereof.**

29. **The Fund would need to enlarge its donor base and receive $12 million (compared with the 2017 annual income of $8.3 million) on a yearly basis to respond more adequately to the high demands for assistance received.**

Annex

List of participants of the expert workshop on the theme "Seeking justice for torture: a victim-centred approach", held on 11 and 12 April 2018

Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Mikołaj Pietrzak (Chair)

Gaby Oré Aguilar

Lawrence Mute

Sara Hossain

Vivienne Nathanson

Invited experts

Anette Carnemalm, Swedish Red Cross (Sweden)

Rupert Skilbeck, REDRESS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Amanda Ghahremani, Canadian Centre for International Justice (Canada)

Somaieh Woodworth, supported by the Canadian Centre for International Justice (Canada)

Anival Cayo Gonzales, Asociación Nacional de Familiares de Secuestrados, Detenidos y Desaparecidos (Peru)

Ann Campbell, Validity (Hungary)

Ayed Mohammad Deeb Abu Eqtaish, Defence for Children International (State of Palestine)

Estela Barnes de Carlotto, Asociación Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Argentina)

Florencia Reggiardo, Center for Justice and International Law (United States of America)

Hassan Bility, Global Justice and Research Project (Liberia)

Jessica Feghali, International Refugee Assistance Project (Lebanon)

Katie Taylor, Reprieve (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Khaled Rawas, supported by the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (Germany)

Nandana Manatunga, Human Rights Office (Sri Lanka)

Nushin Sarkarati, Center for Justice and Accountability (Unites States of America)

Olga Sadovskaya, LUDI (Russian Federation)

Patrick Kroker, European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (Germany)

Paula María Martínez Velásquez, Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Acción Psicosocial (Guatemala)

Alain Werner, Civitas Maxima (Switzerland)

Other participants

Jens Modvig, Chair, Committee against Torture

United Nations A/73/282

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 74 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its resolution 72/163, the General Assembly encouraged contributions to the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and requested the Secretary General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the operations of the Fund.

2. The Secretariat has the honour to refer the General Assembly to the report of the Secretary-General on that subject to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/37/19).

* A/73/150.

18-12656 (E) 080818

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United Nations A/73/283

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 20 of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development

International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/193 on the proclamation of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The report contains a summary of the major activities and initiatives carried out by the World Tourism Organization in conjunction with other actors and highlights key activities and initiatives undertaken by Governments, international organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders within the context of the International Year. In the concluding section of the report, an assessment is provided of the results achieved, and actions and recommendations are set out with regard to sustaining and capitalizing on the significant momentum generated by the International Year.

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I. Background

1. The General Assembly proclaimed 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in its resolution 70/193, in which it invited the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to facilitate the organization and implementation of the International Year, in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, and requested the organization to inform the Assembly at its seventy-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. At its twenty-first session, the UNWTO General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/653 (XXI) in which it welcomed with appreciation the efforts of the UNWTO secretariat to achieve the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on proclaiming 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, and acknowledged with appreciation the efforts of Austria, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Morocco, the Republic of Korea and Rwanda, at the initiative of Samoa, in taking up the endeavour at the United Nations General Assembly.

3. The designation of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development came 50 years after the International Tourist Year was proclaimed in 1967, under the slogan "Tourism — passport to peace", and 15 years after the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002. Furthermore, the adoption of resolution 70/193 in 2015 coincided with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tourism is included in targets under three of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 8, on sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 12, on sustainable consumption and production; and Goal 14, on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. Yet, given its cross-cutting nature and immense value chain, tourism has the potential to directly or indirectly contribute to all 17 Goals.

4. The proclamation of the International Year reflects the important role of sustainable tourism in the achievement of the Goals. Moreover, tourism fosters better understanding among people, leading to a greater awareness of the rich heritage of civilizations and bringing about a better appreciation of the inherent value of different cultures, thereby contributing to strengthened global peace.

5. Within this context, the central aim of the International Year was to raise awareness among decision makers and the public of the contribution of tourism to sustainable development while mobilizing all stakeholders to work together and make tourism a catalyst for positive change. The Year also represented an unparalleled opportunity to foster necessary changes in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour, progressing towards a more sustainable tourism sector worldwide.

II. Plan for the observance of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

6. Pursuant to the request of the UNWTO General Assembly, an International Year Steering Committee was established, composed of UNWTO member States and affiliate members, representatives from academia, global tourism associations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders. The Steering Committee served as the focal point for coordinating the preparation, implementation and promotion of the Year's activities. In addition, an internal working group, created at the UNWTO secretariat and consisting of regional and operational departments, worked on the implementation of the Year.

7. A road map for the observance of the International Year was developed in collaboration with the Steering Committee and served as a guiding document and as a communication tool to disseminate information about the objectives, lines of action (namely, advocacy and awareness-raising, knowledge-sharing, and policy-making and capacity-building), potential activities and a partnership scheme among stakeholders and potential sponsors and partners.

8. A thematic framework was designed to explore and highlight the role of tourism in five key areas of sustainable development: (a) inclusive and sustainable economic growth; (b) social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction; (c) resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change; (d) cultural values, diversity and heritage; and (e) mutual understanding, peace and security.

9. The logo for the International Year was selected out of 115 proposals submitted through a worldwide competition held in 2016. The winning logo featured a dandelion that represented Earth as a planet where people, represented by seeds, travelled in a sustainable and responsible way.

10. The International Year website (www.tourism4development2017.org), available in English, French and Spanish, provided a collaborative platform for all stakeholders to share their International Year-related initiatives, research and stories, thereby stimulating knowledge-sharing and engagement. Over 1,000 activities and initiatives were registered, including 660 events that were uploaded to a digital map of celebrations and 300 solutions, 65 stories and 70 publications and articles related to sustainable tourism that were shared on the platform. The website also contained a set of resources, including social media and other audiovisual materials, such as the official International Year logo and the consumer-oriented International Year campaign, "Travel.Enjoy.Respect". All of these resources were made available to stakeholders following an official request to and subsequent authorization by UNWTO.

11. The International Year was financed entirely by extrabudgetary resources raised through a partnership scheme. In total, 65 sponsors and partners and 15 "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign supporters made around €1.8 million in financial and in-kind contributions, enabling UNWTO to implement a range of activities and initiatives related to the Year. More than 50 per cent of the voluntary contributions came from private sector stakeholders, and the remainder came from, inter alia, public institutions, NGOs and academia. Most of the sponsors and partners came from Europe, contributing about 40 per cent of the funds, followed by Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East.

III. Activities and initiatives organized by the World Tourism Organization and member States

A. Official events of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

12. Fourteen official events were held around the world with more than 5,600 participants, representing a multitude of stakeholders who gathered to discuss topics such as inclusive growth and employment, tourism measurement, tourism and culture, urban tourism, and tourism and technology.

13. In the framework of the official events, five declarations for the future development of tourism were adopted with a special focus on using tourism to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals: (a) the Manila call for action on measuring sustainable tourism; (b) the Chengdu declaration on tourism and the Sustainable

Development Goals; (c) the Montego Bay declaration on jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism; (d) the Lusaka declaration on promoting sustainable tourism, a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa; and (e) the Muscat declaration on tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development.

14. The opening ceremony of the International Year was held on 18 January 2017 at the International Tourism Fair in Madrid, where the UNWTO secretariat is headquartered. More than 600 participants attended the event, including the Prime Minister of Georgia, the Vice-President of Honduras and over 40 tourism ministers. It included a special reception hosted by the King of Spain, Felipe VI, for tourism dignitaries and marked the launch of the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign.

15. All UNWTO regional commission meetings included events dedicated to the International Year:

(a) At the fifty-ninth meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa (18–21 April 2017), 21 tourism ministers from across the continent attended an interactive session on the International Year;

(b) At the meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for the Middle East (24 April 2017), the UNWTO and Arabian Travel Market Ministerial Forum discussed tourism's contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic growth and diversification in the Middle East and North Africa Region;

(c) At the twenty-ninth joint meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Regional Commission for South Asia, held in Bangladesh (15–17 May 2017), participants reviewed activities being carried out at the national level to celebrate the International Year;

(d) At the sixty-first meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for the Americas (29 May–1 June 2017), UNWTO, the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador and the Honduran Institute of Tourism organized an international seminar on the theme "New technologies applied to tourism";

(e) The sixty-first meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Europe (6 and 7 June 2017) involved an event showcasing International Year initiatives developed in several European member States, as well as a tree planting ceremony.

16. On the occasion of the one hundred fifth session of the UNWTO Executive Council, held in Madrid from 10 to 12 May 2017, a round table on the theme "Sustainable urban tourism" was organized by UNWTO, the Spanish Ministry of Energy, Tourism and the Digital Agenda, and the City Council of Madrid. Tourism ministers and international representatives participated in the round table, which enabled the exchange of experiences in urban tourism management.

17. Nearly 1,000 experts from over 80 countries convened at the sixth International Conference on Tourism Statistics, held in Manila from 21 to 24 June 2017, to lay the groundwork for an expanded statistical framework to measure sustainable tourism in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. The outcome of the event, the Manila call for action on measuring sustainable tourism, represented a global commitment to sustainable tourism and the need to measure tourism through a consistent statistical approach, recognizing that effective sustainable tourism policies require an integrated, coherent and robust information base.

18. The twenty-second session of the UNWTO General Assembly, held in Chengdu, China, from 11 to 16 September 2017, featured an International Year event at which numerous delegations of UNWTO affiliate members and member States gathered, with the latter sharing views on the inclusion of tourism in national strategies for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals during a high-level panel.

A key achievement of the session was the approval of the Chengdu declaration on tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals and of the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics.

19. The international conference on the theme "Promoting sustainable tourism: a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa", held in Lusaka from 16 to 18 November 2017, was a flagship International Year event organized in cooperation with the Government of Zambia. African tourism leaders addressed the potential of tourism to alleviate poverty and called for transformative change through the revision of strategies for and approaches to the development of sustainable tourism initiatives in Africa. In addition, the South Luangwa National Park was recognized as the world's first sustainable wildlife park. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Lusaka Declaration on promoting sustainable tourism, a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa.

20. The global conference on the theme "Jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism", held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 27 to 29 November 2017 and organized by UNWTO, the Government of Jamaica, the World Bank Group and the Inter-American Development Bank, was attended by 1,500 participants and featured over 150 speakers. The event was aimed at designing and coordinating an international roadmap that would foster collaborative relationships for inclusive economic and social development through tourism. During the conference, successful public-private partnership models and initiatives were identified and practical plans were established for future development initiatives contributing to sustainable tourism development and building on the International Year. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Montego Bay declaration on jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism.

21. The second UNWTO/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Conference on the theme "Tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development" was held in Muscat on 11 and 12 December 2017. Over 800 global leaders and stakeholders in the sectors of tourism and culture from 70 countries gathered to build and strengthen partnerships between these sectors while moving to enhance their contribution to the 2030 Agenda. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Muscat declaration on tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development.

22. The closing ceremony of the International Year was held on 19 December 2017 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva and was attended by more than 200 participants from around the world. The event included a review of the main achievements of the International Year and a discussion of the road map for advancing the contribution of tourism to the 2030 Agenda in the future. On this occasion, the joint UNWTO/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) publication entitled *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030* was presented.

23. Other significant events in the framework of the International Year included an international conference on the theme "Decent work and socially responsible tourism", organized by UNWTO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and held in Madrid on 20 October 2017, at which the present situation and challenges of the labour market in the tourism sector were discussed; and a session on the theme "The Power of youth: making a difference through sustainable tourism", organized by UNWTO, Hilton and the World Youth Student and Education Travel Confederation and held during the Youth Assembly at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 11 August 2017, in honour of International Youth Day. In addition, the world conference on the theme "Tourism and future energy: unlocking low-carbon growth opportunities", held in Astana on 26 and 27 June 2017 and organized by UNWTO, Expo 2017 Astana and the Ministry of Tourism of Kazakhstan, was aimed at

advancing the commitment of the tourism sector to the global climate change agenda. As an outcome of the conference, a set of recommendations was adopted and a report was launched, entitled *World Conference on Tourism and Future Energy: Unlocking Low-Carbon Growth Opportunities — EXPO 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan, 26–27 June 2017*.

B. Awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives

24. A special ambassadors programme for the International Year was established to enhance advocacy and awareness-raising for tourism as a tool for development and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The special ambassadors engaged in several of the official International Year events and promoted the Year through keynote speeches, video messages and interviews. Each special ambassador had a specific role according to his or her field of expertise. The programme comprised 12 special ambassadors, namely: the former President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos Calderón; the former President of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera; the former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; the President of Malta, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca; the Prime Minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi; King of Bulgaria, Simeon II; the First Lady of Iceland, Eliza Jean Reid; the President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa; the Chair of China UnionPay, Huayong Ge; the President of the Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry, Michael Frenzel; the Chair of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh; and Hello Kitty.

25. The "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign, the first-ever traveller-oriented campaign by UNWTO, was aimed at raising awareness of the capacity of travellers to promote positive change. It included a video, a set of tips developed by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics to encourage responsible travel, a consumer-facing microsite and other materials in 11 languages. Three main actions were taken: (a) awareness-raising/advertising through partnerships; (b) an Instagram photo contest that culminated on World Tourism Day (27 September 2017); and (c) a travellers' competition that garnered a total of 2,400 submissions. The winner of the competition travelled the regions of the world, promoting sustainable travel and sharing experiences on the campaign website. In addition, two weeks prior to the International Year closing ceremony held in December, an exhibition was organized at the Palais des Nations in Geneva to promote the links between tourism and the Goals and to promote the campaign.

26. The campaign engaged 15 global supporters who made in-kind contributions totalling more than €500,000 and ensured visibility through, for instance, showing the campaign on airplanes (All Nippon Airways, Iberia, Air France-KLM), trains (Renfe), media channels (CNN) and in airports (Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, China, and Narita International Airport, Japan). Furthermore, over 70 Governments and private sector and civil society stakeholders uploaded the video to their websites and social media channels and used it during events related to the International Year.

27. The UNWTO Silk Road Programme, in cooperation with the UNWTO Themis Foundation and the University of Valencia, Spain, ran the UNWTO Silk Road Training and Capacity-building Programme as an official International Year activity in Madrid and Valencia, Spain in October and November 2017. The purpose of the project was to develop technical expertise and raise capacity-building standards among Silk Road member States by training national tourism officials and university graduates in areas such as national and transnational cooperation, destination management and tourism route development.

C. Knowledge-sharing

28. Three publications were produced in the context of the International Year, including two flagship publications:

(a) *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030* is a UNWTO/UNDP publication aimed at inspiring Governments, policymakers and tourism businesses to incorporate relevant aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals into policy and financing frameworks as well as business operations;

(b) *Tourism for Development* is a UNWTO flagship report of which volume I is on key areas for action and volume II is on good practices. The publication addresses the changes required in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour if tourism is to effectively contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in each of the five key areas of the International Year. Initially a discussion paper, the report evolved into a full publication through a global consultation process that was conducted in 2017 and led to the incorporation of country examples, case studies and critical comments provided by Governments, organizations and society;

(c) *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Good Practices in the Americas* is a publication that was jointly prepared by UNWTO and the Organization of American States. It includes case studies from across the Americas on the contributions of tourism to Goal implementation strategies.

29. With the support of International Year funds, two additional publications are to be developed in 2018 and 2019 to address specific key areas of the International Year. The second edition of the *Global Report on Women in Tourism* (UNWTO and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)) will be published in partnership with UN-Women, the World Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit and Amadeus in the first quarter of 2019, and a publication on global CO_2 emissions from tourism, including transport, will be released jointly by UNWTO and the International Transport Forum at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in the fourth quarter of 2018.

IV. Activities and initiatives by stakeholders

30. UNWTO registered close to 1,800 International Year activities and initiatives in 170 countries through the International Year website, surveys on the International Year and online research. The activities and initiatives developed by Governments, international organizations, United Nations entities, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders are set out below, providing a snapshot of how the International Year was celebrated around the world. Figures I, II and III show the geographical distribution of activities by UNWTO region, type of activity and type of institution, respectively.

Figure I
Geographical distribution of activities by World Tourism Organization region

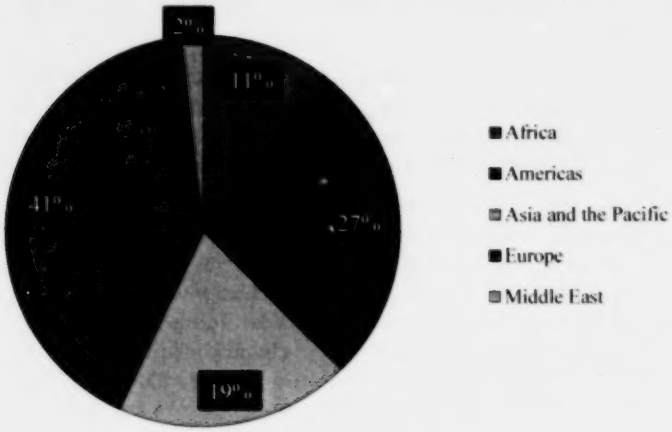
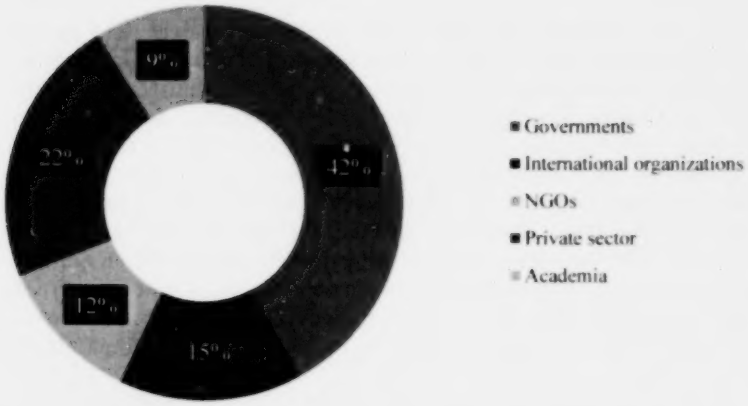


Figure II
Distribution by type of activity

Figure III
Distribution by type of institution



A. Activities and initiatives of Governments

31. A survey among States Members of the United Nations and additional research carried out by UNWTO demonstrated a high level of involvement in the activities to celebrate the International Year. Many Governments defined a strategy or action plan for the implementation of the International Year or set up a national International Year committee or working group to coordinate activities. The committees included representatives from ministries and other public entities, private entities, NGOs, civil society and local communities, among other stakeholders. Some countries without national International Year committees developed other mechanisms to undertake activities in 2017, such as holding meetings within pre-existing working groups and consultations with tourism stakeholders, as well as disseminating information about the International Year.

32. Close to 850 government activities and initiatives were registered, ranging from events and workshops to publications and awards at the national or regional levels. Most of the initiatives were oriented towards international bodies and the public. All of the key areas of sustainable development and lines of action for the International Year were addressed, though most activities were focused on advocacy and awareness-raising.

33. Thirteen countries produced commemorative stamps and/or coins to promote the International Year. Spain issued both, while Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cyprus, Equatorial Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Tonga and Saint Pierre and Miquelon, France issued postage stamps, and Greece and San Marino issued commemorative coins. The coins were valued at €6 (Greece), €2 (San Marino) and €10 (Spain).

34. Governments worldwide supported a wide array of events related to sustainable tourism in 2017. A conference on sustainable tourism in small island developing States was held in Seychelles on 23 and 24 November, at which national and international delegates presented their research findings, project results and ideas related to sustainable tourism. The Japan Tourism Agency organized twin International Year symposiums in Okayama City and Mie, Japan, from 15 to 19 October, with a focus on enhancing the empowerment of women in tourism and mutual understanding between tourists and local communities. At a workshop in Athens on 2 March, on the theme "Destination Greece, 365 days — the role of sustainable tourism development", the Greek Ministry of Tourism presented its strategy and priorities to combat

seasonality. Mexico organized its first sustainable design competition for tourism to encourage the manufacture of sustainable tourism products based on the concept of the circular economy.

35. Several countries indicated that they had conducted research and issued publications in 2017 that addressed several key areas of the International Year, including the following: Germany published a study on development factor tourism and the economic contribution of tourism expenditures by Germans to developing and emerging countries, showing significant and positive impacts on gross domestic product, employment and public infrastructure; the Japan International Cooperation Agency conducted research on tourism development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and developed an indicator toolkit for tourism development projects contributing to the latter; Brazil produced a guide on tourism and sustainability, aimed at disseminating responsible practices among tourism service providers; and Senegal initiated studies for the development of ecotourism in the regions of Tambacounda and Fatick, including recommendations and an action plan.

36. Some countries launched projects in the context of the International Year. Jamaica, for example, initiated a programme aimed at mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk management into tourism planning and offering capacity-building workshops for stakeholders. Zimbabwe provided tourism-related training and capacity-building to women, youth and small and medium-sized enterprises in the area around Victoria Falls.

37. Governments played a leading role in promoting the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign. Many countries disseminated the campaign, in most cases through social media, websites and events, but some, such as Andorra, Angola, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Zimbabwe, also broadcast the campaign video on national or local television and radio channels. In addition, Seychelles held an inter-school public speaking competition on the campaign.

38. Besides promoting the campaign, numerous countries designed their own awareness-raising initiatives and programmes. For instance, Papua New Guinea implemented an awareness-raising programme and a debate competition in schools about the International Year, helping students to understand the importance and benefits of sustainable tourism development. The Spanish Balearic Islands launched a three-month campaign aimed at raising awareness among residents' and tourists of the importance of responsible water use.

39. In response to the UNWTO survey, Governments indicated that the International Year had improved understanding of tourism as a tool for development and for achieving the Goals, both within Governments and among national tourism stakeholders. As an example, Guatemala had seen a greater willingness on the part of tourism service providers to implement quality and sustainability strategies that, in addition to making operations more competitive, allowed for more sustainable and inclusive consumption practices and actions.

40. The International Year also triggered greater inclusion of tourism in development policies, plans or strategies, changes to or the creation of national tourism plans, and the establishment of specific tourism laws or regulations. For instance, the framework and guidelines of the International Year were used in the review or formulation of the national tourism plans or strategies of Brazil, El Salvador, Maldives, Namibia, Paraguay, the Philippines, Uganda, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

B. Activities and initiatives of United Nations entities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations

41. A total 533 activities and initiatives to celebrate the International Year were implemented by United Nations entities, international organizations and NGOs. Most activities were centred on advocacy and awareness-raising among the general public and the private sector. The key area most addressed was that of cultural values, diversity and heritage

42. With the support of the Statistics Division of the United Nations, UNWTO launched an initiative on measuring sustainable tourism to develop an international statistical framework to support the integrated measurement of sustainable tourism at the global, national and subnational levels.

43. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organized a series of conferences and workshops in the Dominican Republic, Mauritius, the Philippines and Saint Lucia, within the framework of the One Planet network (formerly the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns) and in the context of the International Climate Initiative project on transforming tourism value chains. In addition, in collaboration with the Centre for Responsible Travel, UNEP organized a forum in Washington, D.C., on World Tourism Day, 2017, with panel discussions on the five key areas of the International Year.

44. UNDP organized a conference on sustainable tourism for development in Izmir, Turkey, on 14 and 15 December 2017. UNDP and UNWTO also pooled their efforts to prepare one of the flagship publications entitled *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030*.

45. The 2017 Global Aid for Trade Review conducted by the World Trade Organization (WTO) incorporated the focus of the International Year through sessions on such themes as "Tourism for development in least developed countries" and "Tourism and travel facilitation and connectivity" and through an International Year social event. The report entitled *Tourism for Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries: Leveraging Resources for Sustainable Tourism with the Enhanced Integrated Framework*, published jointly by UNWTO, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Enhanced Integrated Framework, was launched on the same occasion.

46. ITC and UNWTO joined forces, bringing together a rich combination of expertise to partner countries in the design, management and implementation of national tourism export strategies. The resulting state-of-the-art methodology represents a joint ITC-UNWTO response to achieving Goal 8. The approach, which was laid out in a study entitled "ITC-UNWTO national tourism export strategies: reinforcing capacities to strengthen tourism value-chains and enhance local economic impact", was launched during the Aid for Trade Global Review 2017 and provides a blueprint for the development and competitiveness of tourism as an export sector.

47. Several United Nations entities, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), UNEP, WTO, ILO and UNDP, made significant contributions to the flagship publication *Tourism for Development* by providing comments and case studies.

48. UNCTAD launched its publication entitled *Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth*, at the UNWTO secretariat in Madrid.

49. The World Bank Group and the International Finance Corporation, issued a working paper entitled "20 reasons sustainable tourism counts for development", which focused on the wider benefits of sustainable tourism along the five key areas of the International Year. The Group also held an event in Washington, D.C. on the theme "Tourism knowledge exchange 2017: delivering on inclusion through tourism", which brought together tourism leaders and supported the official International Year event held in Montego Bay.

50. United Nations entities helped in the promotion of the International Year through their respective websites, social media channels and dedicated articles.

51. The World Travel and Tourism Council, an international organization representing major travel and tourism companies in the private sector, drafted a declaration for the International Year that was adopted by its membership, composed of 150 leading tourism companies, and that calls for the freedom to travel, policies for growth and responsible and sustainable tourism practices. In addition, the theme of the Council's annual Global Summit in 2017, "Transforming our world", was aligned with the International Year and focused on the contribution of tourism to sustainable development around the world.

52. The Global Travel Association Coalition (now Uniting Travel), which is composed of ICAO, Airports Council International, the Pacific Asia Travel Association, the World Economic Forum, the Cruise Lines International Association and the World Travel and Tourism Council, welcomed the International Year as an opportunity to underline the immense socioeconomic opportunities the sector brought to all societies.

53. The Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism held events to discuss findings on the themes "Promoting European sustainable tourism for all" and "Smart tourism destinations' contribution for the planet and its people" over the course of 2017.

54. Throughout 2017, the International Tourism Partnership, a global platform that counts among its membership some of the world's leading hotel groups, such as Hilton, Marriott and Four Seasons, encouraged its members to see tourism as a sustainable development tool and advocated aligning all actions of the hotel sector with the Goals, including specific targets on youth employment and resource efficiency.

55. Hostelling International, a global network of youth hostel associations in more than 80 countries, actively promoted the International Year and used its Sleep for Peace initiative, supported by UNWTO, to celebrate mutual understanding, intercultural connections and peace during the week between the International Day of Peace and World Tourism Day (21–27 September 2017).

56. Positive Impact, a global NGO in the event industry, prepared a report entitled "*Telling the Story of the Power of Events during the United Nations Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development*" which included contributions from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and UNICEF. The report outlines how the event industry can contribute to achieving the Goals and serves as a framework for the global "Collaborate for Good" campaign in 2018.

C. Activities and initiatives of the private sector and other stakeholders

57. Around 600 initiatives from the private sector and other stakeholders were registered, most of them focused on advocacy and awareness-raising. The impact and outreach of the initiatives varied significantly, with activities ranging from large national conferences to a sustainable tour of a national park. Many stakeholders defined a strategy or action plan to implement their International Year initiatives.

Some designated sustainable tourism for development as a year-round theme for their tourism activities, while others planned events related to the International Year.

58. Booking.com released a global sustainable travel report, in which it highlighted the growing consumer demand to explore more sustainable travel options. The company also launched a "Booking booster" accelerator programme to identify, mentor and support innovative social enterprise start-ups in sustainable tourism through a €2 million fund, with a focus on preserving cultural heritage, protecting the environment and empowering local communities. In addition, it expanded the programme regionally with a series of compact "Booster labs" programmes to support early-stage start-ups in sustainable tourism and announced plans to set up a separate €2 million "Booking cares" fund to support non-profit projects and change-makers in sustainable tourism.

59. Airbnb partnered with UNWTO and engaged in activities to celebrate the International Year, for example, by promoting the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign through the company's communication channels and by launching a community tourism programme to support innovative projects.

60. Hilton initiated numerous activities addressing areas such as youth, community investment, environmental impact, inclusive growth and human rights. For instance, in Europe, more than 2,000 refugees were supported through programmes focusing on skills training and employment, including 42 of whom were hired. In addition, Hilton provided assistance to 250 young people with disabilities, who received skills training through local partnerships with 10 countries. As a follow-up action to the International Year, the company launched its 2030 global goals for sustainable travel, comprising 23 targets that were aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and were aimed at cutting the company's environmental footprint in half, while doubling its social impact by 2030 through responsible hospitality across the value chain.

61. Chemonics International, an international development company, launched a tourism sector development programme in Jordan on building economic sustainability through tourism, which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development. A variety of tourism development initiatives, conducted in line with the International Year were aimed at supporting tourism-driven economic growth and job creation.

62. Amadeus IT Group launched, in partnership with UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism of Kenya, a programme for inclusive local economic growth through entrepreneurship and employment in travel and tourism, which served to empower women and youth in underprivileged communities through skills development and provided entrepreneurship opportunities in tourism.

63. Exemplary actions from small and medium-sized enterprises in the International Year framework included the food waste reduction project of Betterfly Tourism, consisting of a training programme, webinars and the creation of measurement tools and guidelines, and sustainable tourism workshops in Italy and Slovenia by Ecobnb.

64. A survey of private sector stakeholder activities related to the International Year revealed that the UNWTO activities and initiatives carried out within the context of the Year were considered very valuable and helped to impart a better understanding of tourism as a tool for development and for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the International Year triggered changes in stakeholder business practices, leading to a more sustainable sector worldwide.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

65. The proclamation of the International Year successfully served to underscore the role of tourism in the achievement of the global development agenda and the Goals. With the participation of millions of people and thousands of activities worldwide, the observance of the International Year undoubtedly contributed to a wider awareness and recognition of the potential of tourism to spearhead economic growth, social inclusion, cultural and environmental preservation, and peace and mutual understanding.

66. Global celebrations held in the framework of the International Year highlighted the commitment of partners to working together to make the sector a catalyst for positive change. The activities initiated in 2017 brought the issue of sustainable tourism to prominence and will continue to serve as a road map for the global tourism community to further embrace sustainable practices and maximize the engagement of the travel and tourism sector in the 2030 Agenda.

67. The International Year sparked unprecedented commitments to action extending beyond 2017. Some specific actions are already under way, including the Tourism for Sustainable Development Goals platform (www.tourism4sdgs.org) developed by UNWTO with the support of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland. The platform, which is aimed at encouraging policymakers, international organizations, academia, donors, companies and all tourism stakeholders to engage in implementation strategies for the Goals, was launched during the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York on 18 July. The platform's three main features, "learn, share and act", serve as calls to action, conversation and collaboration in developing a sustainable tourism sector.

68. Other UNWTO initiatives include the establishment of two special ambassador programmes, for tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals and for responsible travel, as a follow-up to the International Year special ambassadors programme. The programmes engage high-level and influential personalities from around the world to advocate a responsible and sustainable tourism sector. In addition, the campaign entitled "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" will continue to call on responsible travellers to contribute towards the Goals.

69. Further efforts are needed, however, to maintain and capitalize upon the significant momentum generated during the International Year. The General Assembly may therefore wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) To increase awareness of the contribution of tourism to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and encourage the full integration of tourism into national, regional and global development agendas, as well as in development cooperation policies;

(b) To engage with the United Nations system and its diverse entities to adopt a coordinated approach with UNWTO when developing sustainable tourism, recognizing that the cross-cutting nature of the tourism sector provides the opportunity for the system to deliver as one with regard to tourism and the 2030 Agenda;

(c) To encourage relevant changes in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour, with a view to further deepening the impact of tourism on sustainable development, to increase financial support for tourism development and to monitor sectoral changes in respect of the 2030 Agenda;

(d) **To support public-private partnerships in tourism that create income-generating opportunities and inclusive green and blue growth and that finance infrastructure and technology that improve resource efficiency, mitigate climate change and help to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation.**

United Nations A/73/284

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 104 of the provisional agenda*
Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Thirty-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) was established by the General Assembly in 1980 as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations for the purpose of undertaking independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. For nearly 40 years, UNIDIR has consistently produced a significant output of high-quality work that, as the General Assembly has observed, requires a high degree of expertise.

In its resolution 70/69, marking the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to commission an assessment by an independent third party with a mandate to prepare a report on a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for the Institute and to report in this regard, taking into account the assessment, to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

The present report places the results of the assessment in the context of recent developments, notably the agenda for disarmament which was launched by the Secretary-General on 24 May 2018, as well as system-wide management reforms currently under way. In the report, the important contribution that UNIDIR can make to encouraging new momentum and, potentially, progress on key disarmament issues is highlighted. In keeping with current management priorities, the need to streamline administrative support functions and enhance managerial discretion so as to enable the continued autonomy and cost-efficiency of UNIDIR is also highlighted. Drawing on the assessment, a number of recommendations are presented regarding the operating model of UNIDIR, including on its research agenda, cost structure and staffing. Recommendations are also offered on the financing and budgeting model of UNIDIR, taking into account the necessary balance of voluntary funding and the subvention that

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the Institute receives from the regular budget. With regard to the latter, an increase in the subvention is recommended in order to support the predictable delivery of the mandated functions of UNIDIR to support the informed participation of all Member States in disarmament deliberations, as well as to ensure its continued independence, impartiality and accountability.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) was established by the General Assembly in 1980 as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations for the purpose of undertaking independent research on disarmament and related problems, in particular international security issues. Its work, as set out in its statute, aims to facilitate progress towards greater security for all States and towards the economic and social development of all peoples; to promote informed participation by all States in disarmament efforts; to assist ongoing negotiations, and to carry out in-depth, forward-looking and long-term research on disarmament so as to provide insights and stimulate new initiatives for negotiation. In the ensuing decades, UNIDIR has consistently produced a significant output of high-quality work that, as the General Assembly has observed, requires a high degree of expertise.

2. In its resolution 70/69 marking the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to commission an assessment by an independent third party with a mandate to prepare a report on a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model and to report in this regard, taking into account the assessment, to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. The present report responds to that request.

A. Background

3. Since the establishment of UNIDIR by the General Assembly, funding arrangements have been a source of debate among Member States. The adoption of the statute of UNIDIR was delayed until 1984 owing to a lack of agreement about the appropriate mix of voluntary contributions and regular budget financing (see A/39/PV.102). The subsequent compromise noted that the voluntary contributions would form the principal source of financing and, as stated in article VII.2 of the statute, that a "subvention toward meeting the costs of the Director and the staff of the Institute may be provided from the regular budget of the United Nations, not to exceed an amount equivalent to one half of the assured income of the Institute from voluntary sources in respect of the year for which a subvention is being requested".

4. Over the subsequent 34 years, the implications and sustainability of this financing model for the structure, administration and operations of UNIDIR have been extensively, but inconclusively, discussed. In 2004, the Secretary-General noted the vital role of the regular budget subvention for "the independent and continuous nature of the Institute's normal functioning" (see A/C.5/59/3/Add.1). The General Assembly recommended an increase in the subvention to UNIDIR both in 2005 and in 2010 (see resolutions 60/89 and 65/87). The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, in its capacity as Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, has, since 1983, consistently expressed concern over the reliance on voluntary contributions for the independence and stability of the Institute and called for an increase in the subvention to cover the costs of institutional staff, including at its most recent meeting, in June 2018 (see A/73/259).

5. Over the years, a number of concrete recommendations and proposals have been put forward regarding the structure and financing of UNIDIR. The Office of Internal Oversight Services, in its governance audits of the Institute conducted in 2010 and 2011, highlighted the unsustainability of funding for core posts and recommended that a proposal for a more sustainable funding structure be put forward in order for

UNIDIR to achieve its mandate and objectives.[1] In 2014, the Board commissioned an internal institutional needs assessment by an external assessor which made a number of recommendations, including regarding the establishment of a revolving fund as well as core staffing needs, that were shared informally with Member States. In 2016, in the context of Member State deliberations on a draft resolution on the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR (A/C.1/70/L.30) and with a view to informing the Secretary-General's funding proposal for UNIDIR for the 2018–2019 biennium, the Department of Management undertook an internal assessment of core staffing requirements, the conclusions of which were also reported to Member States (see A/72/154, para. 67).

6. Those initiatives notwithstanding, the operating and funding arrangements of UNIDIR have remained largely unchanged since 1980. The two most notable variations have been, first, the relative decline of the proportion of the subvention relative to voluntary funding: in 2017, the contribution from the regular budget comprised some 9 per cent of the annual budget of UNIDIR and currently does not cover the net salary and common staff costs of the Director (D-2). Nor does it cover liabilities or related support costs of the incumbent. Second, voluntary funds have become increasingly earmarked for specific projects with very limited discretion in their use.

7. The Institute has weathered a number of financial crises, most notably in the period following the global economic recession of 2008. With the advice of the Board, significant administrative assistance from the United Nations Office at Geneva and financial support from a number of Member States, it has taken a number of steps to stabilize its financial situation. These include the establishment, in 2015, of a revolving capital fund to support a minimum cash base in the context of unpredictable voluntary flows, as well as a contingency reserve for accrued liabilities. Nevertheless, the financial stability and sustainability of UNIDIR rest on short-term, unpredictable foundations which affect strategic and longer-term planning, decision-making and activities.

B. Process and organization of the independent third-party assessment

8. Subsequent to the adoption of resolution 70/69, the General Assembly approved an amount of $200,000 for the conduct of the independent third-party assessment (see resolution 72/262 A). To ensure the independence of the exercise, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Office at Geneva, was tasked with managing the process. In mid-2017, a tendering process was initiated through standard United Nations procurement practices, at the conclusion of which Dalberg Global Development Advisers were awarded a contract.

9. The third-party assessment was initiated on 29 January 2018 and the final report was delivered to the Office for Disarmament Affairs on 18 May 2018. This period coincided with a period of transition in UNIDIR leadership during which a new Director was appointed, who took up her functions on 12 March. As part of its work, the external consultant contacted more than 60 stakeholders, and interviewed 49, including members of the Board, Member State representatives covering disarmament issues in Geneva, New York and capitals, relevant staff from the United Nations Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes, and experts from external policy research institutes and think-tanks working on disarmament issues. UNIDIR made available its documentation, data and archives to the consultant, and the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office at Geneva provided additional data and materials as required.

[1] Audit AN2011/385/01 (see A/68/337 (Part I)).

10. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, together with UNIDIR, convened an informal meeting in Geneva on 20 June 2018 to offer interested Member States an opportunity to be briefed by the consultant on the assessment and its findings. A copy of the assessment has been made available to Member States upon request.

11. The Board considered the third-party assessment at its meeting in New York on 26 June 2018. It took note of the professional and comprehensive nature of the assessment and strongly endorsed the assessment's view on the importance of increased regular budget support towards meeting the costs of the Director and the staff of the Institute. It called upon Member States to endorse such an increase in the regular budget for 2020.

II. Current context of international disarmament and the United Nations

12. While the structure of, and the debate on, the funding arrangements of UNIDIR have remained largely constant, the context in which the Institute operates as an autonomous institution has changed fundamentally. Developments in disarmament, as well as reforms of the United Nations, have a significant impact on the broader political and security environment, as well as the administrative and operational context in which UNIDIR works. These are important factors to be taken into account when considering the structural, financial, administrative and operational aspects of the Institute in achieving its mandate and objectives.

A. Recent developments in multilateral disarmament

13. On 24 May 2018, in a speech at the University of Geneva, I presented my agenda for disarmament as set out in *Securing Our Common Future: an Agenda for Disarmament*. I was motivated to do so by my deep concern at the risks and, indeed, realities of conflict in today's turbulent and increasingly multipolar environment. In the agenda there is a call to collectively bring disarmament and arms control, critical tools in preventing and ending crises and armed conflict, back to the centre of the work of the United Nations.

14. In seeking to reinvigorate dialogue and negotiations on international disarmament and create new momentum, a comprehensive disarmament road map was offered that Member States, United Nations entities, civil society, the private sector and others could follow to save humanity, lives and future generations. The agenda recognizes the important role that UNIDIR plays in supporting Member States and multilateral processes on disarmament and proposes that this strategic role be enhanced, including in the convening and facilitation of multilateral engagement. Moreover, the mandate of UNIDIR to support the informed participation of all States in disarmament efforts is a priority in achieving better links between disarmament and progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

15. Concretely, the agenda sets out a range of practical actions that different United Nations entities will take and highlights the role and measures that UNIDIR will take in, inter alia, nuclear weapons risk reduction; transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities; examining the implications of new weapons technologies, including hypersonic missiles and armed unmanned aerial vehicles; integration of arms control measures into conflict prevention activities, and the impact of the Institute's work in bringing gender equality perspectives into disarmament deliberations.

16. I am under no illusion regarding the challenges that proposals to reinvigorate disarmament present. Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control touch the security perceptions and needs that underpin both national sovereignty and human well-being, while multilateral governance has become more complex and fragmented. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and her office are devoting considerable effort to communicating proposals and soliciting views and perspectives from the disarmament community. At the same time, I have been heartened by the response of many Member State representatives and stakeholders, including the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, to the effect that the perils of today's insecurity and instability require bold and forward-looking action. UNIDIR has an important contribution to make in stimulating new ideas and facilitating dialogue on the agenda over the coming years and I count on UNIDIR to play a key supporting role in its advancement.

B. Key United Nations management issues

17. UNIDIR already enjoys considerable autonomy within the United Nations system. It has sole responsibility for the mobilization of voluntary resources that enable the Institute to function and currently make up over 90 per cent of its annual budget. Its programme of work is approved by the Board, to which the Director reports. The Board also approves the Institute's annual budget estimates, taking into account the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Director has overall responsibility for the organization, direction and administration of the Institute, including the appointment and supervision of staff, preparation and implementation of the work programme and annual budget, as well as partnerships with Governments and other entities.

18. Yet in recent years, and notwithstanding the system-wide benefits accrued through the enterprise resource planning system (Umoja) and International Public Sector Accounting Standards, the participation of UNIDIR in these processes has increased the administrative support it requires from the United Nations Office at Geneva.[2] The introduction of regular United Nations contractual arrangements (described below), for example, means that Secretariat recruitment procedures and timelines for fixed-term and temporary appointments now apply, regardless of the statutory authority of the UNIDIR Director to appoint staff to the Institute. The reports for the annual budget of UNIDIR, around $2.7 million in 2017, are prepared and reviewed internally, reviewed by the United Nations Office at Geneva, and reviewed again by the Department of Management in New York before inclusion in the annual report of the Director. While the Director of the Institute has delegated authority to receive voluntary contributions for research projects, and reports individually to each donor on the relevant projects, budgetary allotments for the Institute's accounts are issued and approved by the United Nations Office at Geneva rather than by the Institute.

19. Such procedures are not only inefficient but, as they incur cost-recovery charges for UNIDIR, financially prohibitive for the Institute and burdensome for the Secretariat. They underscore the urgent need to better align resource management authority and mandate delivery responsibility, supported by streamlined processes and procedures and greater accountability, the vision that is at the heart of the current management reforms. The Secretariat and UNIDIR have been asked to map human resource and financial processes with a view to establishing clearer divisions of roles and responsibilities, segregating duties and eliminating duplicative functions.

[2] As noted in the internal assessment of the core staffing needs of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research prepared by the Department of Management in 2016.

III. Findings of the independent third-party assessment

A. Role of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as a research institute in the United Nations system

20. The General Assembly has repeatedly recognized, most recently in 2015 (see resolution 70/69), the contribution that UNIDIR makes to progress in disarmament, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation education. It has also underscored the importance of UNIDIR as a stand-alone and autonomous institution. The independent third-party assessment found a similar appreciation of the unique nature of UNIDIR among Member States, independent research institutes and United Nations stakeholders. The assessment highlighted five contributing attributes of UNIDIR: credibility, independence, relevance, reach and convening power. Stakeholders, according to the assessment, engage and/or made use of the products and services offered by UNIDIR to inform positions on specific disarmament topics; to fill research and/or knowledge gaps, and to benefit from the credibility that UNIDIR brings to disarmament research and debates. In a deteriorating international security environment, when trust and dialogue are in short supply, an organ of the United Nations disarmament machinery that commands credibility and a degree of confidence among stakeholders is a critical asset for multilateral disarmament processes and for the Organization.

21. In recent years, Member States and the General Assembly have been increasingly drawing on the support of UNIDIR to facilitate discussions in subsidiary groups of the Conference on Disarmament, to serve as consultants for expert-level deliberations[3] or to facilitate knowledge and information through side-events during formal disarmament deliberations. The Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNIDIR have deepened their longstanding collaboration with joint studies and events. The increased interaction between the Institute and other parts of the United Nations system through interagency processes, such as those in place to address small arms and light weapons and landmines, is to be welcomed, as is its role as a source of expertise for Security Council-established panels of experts and Secretariat entities on arms embargoes. The disarmament field has expanded and, with it, the activity of UNIDIR as a provider of diverse public goods to a range of stakeholders.

22. At the same time, and as the assessment indicated, there are some whom believe that UNIDIR could do more to connect disarmament with other multilateral initiatives, notably the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as to facilitate the engagement of academic and research actors with intergovernmental processes. As highlighted in the agenda, there is a need to reinforce partnerships for disarmament at all levels and UNIDIR is particularly well placed to convene and facilitate dialogue. The intention of the new Director of UNIDIR, as highlighted in her recent annual report (A/73/256), to increase dialogue activities with a view to engaging broader and more diverse perspectives in disarmament deliberations is a welcome development. Where relevant and appropriate, the convening ability of UNIDIR will be drawn upon to take forward the agenda and encourage Member States to explore how they can make use of this dialogue facilitation capacity, especially in addressing emerging and/or sensitive disarmament topics that lend themselves to more informal discussions or benefit from inputs from a wider range of stakeholders.

23. The assessment is frank in finding that the unique identity and added value of UNIDIR is threatened by its current operating and funding models. It concludes that,

[3] Over the past two years, for example, UNIDIR has served as consultant to groups of governmental experts on nuclear verification, fissile materials, cyber-security and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

in the absence of other alternatives, reliance on a small set of primarily European donors may skew perceptions, if not the reality, of the focus, balance and diversity of the UNIDIR research agenda and staff. This is a risk for any entity that relies on voluntary funding, but it is even more acute in the disarmament environment given the divisions that exist among Member States on almost all issues. The sections below explore the operating and funding models of UNIDIR and possible options to address this risk.

B. Operating model of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

24. The assessment looked at three areas of UNIDIR operations: research activities, cost structure and staffing, and made a number of related recommendations.

1. Research agenda

25. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research has traditionally sought to maintain a broad research portfolio covering weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms, and emerging technologies and means of warfare, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender and disarmament. It has also retained institutional knowledge on the United Nations disarmament machinery and deliberations. This deliberate breadth, which reflects the intergovernmental disarmament agenda, is designed to respond to and support most requests from Member States, United Nations entities and disarmament processes for knowledge, insights or policy advice. However, as the assessment points out, the specific focus and resources of inquiry in any of these broad categories differ year by year and are primarily in response to the ability of the Institute to secure funding from donors for specific research projects. UNIDIR has not, to date, established a multi-year strategic research agenda that could assist the Institute in reaffirming the independence of research, establish a balanced programme of work, determine the level of effort needed for each programme and project and allow UNIDIR to communicate its longer-term funding needs and gaps. The assessment proposes that such a research agenda could reinforce confidence in the impartiality of UNIDIR, demonstrate its added value and support fundraising.

26. A strategic plan that includes, but is not limited to, the Institute's research agenda, is a central tool for governance, resource mobilization and communication. Equally, it is critical to enable UNIDIR to set clear goals and monitor progress against established performance indicators. The accountability, and thereby the ability, of UNIDIR to function as an autonomous and stand-alone entity will be significantly enhanced by the elaboration of a proactive and transparent plan. It is recommended that UNIDIR establish a two- to three-year strategic plan that sets out the strategic objectives, priorities and key activities of the Institute, to be presented to the Board for approval and communicated to Member States and other potential donors.

27. The assessment notes that a strategic agenda would assist the Board in fully exercising its guidance and oversight responsibilities of the Institute. The active engagement of the Board and its recent decision to meet twice a year to consider UNIDIR research and activities is a welcome development. The diverse and combined experience and expertise of the Board is a considerable asset to the Institute that should be fully exploited. In that regard, it is important to note that, at its most recent meeting, the Board considered the new Director's strategic objectives and priorities for 2018–2020. The Director and the Board are encouraged to translate this vision into a strategic plan with appropriate monitoring and reporting frameworks.

28. As part of this strategic approach, and in line with the assessment's recommendations, UNIDIR is encouraged to focus increasingly on the development

of a small set of larger, multi-year research programmes and move away from the model of multiple small-scale, single-issue projects. Such an approach would offer the Institute the opportunity to invest in developing expertise and intellectual leadership in a particular topic or subject area over a given period and could promote more proactive and responsive engagement by the Institute to new and/or emerging developments by providing a degree of flexibility in the organization of events and the preparation of research outputs. It would be more cost-efficient and help to realize some administrative economies of scale, especially with regard to project monitoring, evaluation and reporting to donors. Ultimately, it would encourage movement away from single-donor funded projects in favour of multi-donor supported programmes to the benefit of contributing donors as well as the perception of the Institute's research independence as discussed further below.

29. Ultimately, while a comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan and research agenda are necessary for resource mobilization, strategic approaches are not sufficient for successful fundraising. Potentially important areas of inquiry do not always generate support from donors, sometimes because they address politically sensitive and/or divisive disarmament issues — nuclear risk reduction is a current example — or because cutting-edge issues may not yet be on the multilateral disarmament agenda, for example, developments in drone swarming technology. Moreover, important services provided by the Institute that are not strictly research rarely attract donor attention. The information and capacity-building support offered by UNIDIR to countries outside the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on various disarmament issues, for example, receives little financial support. Thus, it is important to continue to explore how the full range of UNIDIR activities, which include, but are not limited to, original policy research, can be sustainably supported.

2. Cost structure

30. The assessment suggests that the cost structure of UNIDIR, including direct and indirect costs, may be higher than that of some external research institutes but that, currently, stakeholders are willing to pay this premium given the unique attributes of the Institute.

31. It is the case that the activities undertaken by the Institute accrue costs both for the United Nations Office at Geneva, as the host and provider of some administrative services to UNIDIR, and for the Institute itself in maintaining the physical and administrative infrastructure and capacity required to support research and other activities. It is also the case, as previous discussions on change management initiatives demonstrate, that Member States see significant advantages to UNIDIR remaining a stand-alone entity within the United Nations framework. Many, including the Board, also emphasize the importance of UNIDIR being physically located in the Palais des Nations in terms of accessibility for delegations, the ability to respond to ad hoc and informal requests for information, advice or assistance, and in order to clearly reflect the role of UNIDIR within the United Nations disarmament machinery.

32. Member States continue, rightly, to seek further decreases in the Organization's operating costs. As part of this effort, Member States have encouraged the Secretariat to review the provision of logistical and administrative services on a cost-reimbursable basis. Inevitably, this has an impact on UNIDIR administrative costs and the support that the Secretariat can provide. With the prospect of the introduction of the global service delivery model, there are considerable uncertainties regarding the future structure, modalities and cost of administrative support provided by the Secretariat to UNIDIR. Recognizing the need to put in place global systems and leverage economies of scale, in order to be relevant for today's world the United Nations needs to be able to provide cost-efficient support to the entities established by the General Assembly. All steps necessary will be taken to continue to provide

administrative support to UNIDIR, including office space, at a total rate not exceeding 8 per cent of the Institute's annual budget.[4]

3. Staffing

33. Until 2015, UNIDIR engaged resident staff on the basis of letters of appointment issued by the Director to carry out specific research projects and activities, produce research products or undertake other specific, time-limited tasks on either a part-time or a full-time basis. Most management, administrative and other support staff were recruited on the same basis. Despite the short-term nature of these contracts, UNIDIR was able to maintain relative institutional continuity: three of the five current institutional staff members each have a minimum of 10 years of service in UNIDIR.

34. With the inclusion of UNIDIR in Umoja, long-standing challenges of those arrangements, including lack of clarity over liabilities, were addressed and the contracting modalities of UNIDIR were aligned with United Nations Secretariat arrangements. UNIDIR institutional staff is currently composed of, in addition to the Director, the Deputy to the Director (P-5), a Chief of Research (P-5), a Finance and Budget Officer (P-4) and an Administrative Assistant (G-4). All but the latter are recruited on fixed-term appointments.[5] In addition, a Communications Officer (P-4) is being recruited on a temporary appointment to increase the Institute's profile, visibility and outreach, a capacity gap highlighted in the assessment and supported by the Board.

35. As the assessment notes, this is less than half the capacity of the institutional staff that UNIDIR maintained prior to 2011. According to its estimates, UNIDIR is currently understaffed to effectively develop and implement plans, manage and administer research projects, including financial reporting, mobilize funds, represent and communicate the work of the Institute. As the assessment also notes, two of the core staff are also responsible for research activities, both in terms of carrying out individual specialized research and in terms of managing projects and teams. Yet the costs of maintaining a smaller core team have increased significantly given United Nations fixed-term rates and obligations, including the requirement that funding and liabilities for the contractual period — or at least one year — of a staff member are set aside in advance.

36. United Nations consultancy arrangements provide a more flexible and lower-cost option to meet research staffing needs and form the majority of contracts issued by UNIDIR. In recognition of the requirements of research generation, UNIDIR has been granted the possibility to engage consultants on contracts of longer duration. However, as the assessment notes, there are some constraints to consultancy contracts. The arrangement does not offer health insurance, relocation, pension or leave benefits, limiting its appeal, especially for researchers from outside Europe, those with families or with some degree of seniority. Consultants do not have the authority to supervise teams, to access Umoja for administrative self-service tasks or to officially represent the Institute. Paradoxically, therefore, increased reliance on consultant contracts requires more core staff capacity, both at the administrative and management levels.

37. The Institute thus finds itself in a constrained situation. Given the current core staff size and consultant contractual limitations, it will be difficult for the Institute to scale up its profile, research and activities. This, in turn, affects its ability to engage with partners and donors, raise funds and manage a wider range of projects. Where it

[4] This is the percentage levied by all United Nations multi-partner trust funds for administrative support as well as the percentage charged by the United Nations Office for Project Services for service provision.

[5] The leader for the conventional arms programme is also on a temporary appointment.

succeeds in drawing in more voluntary funding through projects, it faces increased core staffing requirements and, therefore, costs. And it confronts the possibility of being less, not more, responsive to requests and opportunities given the limited flexibility of most research project funds.

38. There is no single solution to a more equitable, effective and cost-efficient staffing model. Going forward, and drawing on the approach of many independent research institutes, UNIDIR is encouraged to pursue a number of parallel options. UNIDIR is encouraged to explore the possibility of using individual contractor agreements which, depending on their type and duration, can offer access to some benefits and thus may be an option to attract research talent and diverse staff.

39. The Institute is also encouraged to invest in partnerships with specialized research institutes, especially in non-OECD countries, that could facilitate visiting fellowships, as envisaged in the statute of UNIDIR, and contribute to a diverse and vibrant research community.

40. Going forward, the Institute may wish to consider a more decentralized operating model where individual programme heads, under the supervision of the Director and in line with the established strategic objectives, priorities and budget, are responsible for developing, mobilizing funding for, and implementing research projects and activities. This recognizes the specialized nature of research subjects and capacities, as well as the potential for nimble scaling up and down of research interests and activities over time. Programme leaders would be hired under temporary appointments which would enable them to supervise consultant staff and function with greater self-sufficiency, inter alia, through Umoja.

41. A more focused and, as required, reprofiled management team could then give greater attention to setting strategic objectives, priorities and programmes; establishing and overseeing policies and procedures for research and project design, monitoring and evaluation; resource mobilization, management and reporting; and external partnerships, and communication and outreach.

C. Financing and budgeting model of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

42. Given the influence of the finances of UNIDIR on the structure and operations of the Institute, the comprehensive treatment by the assessment of the Institute's financing and budgeting model is welcomed. Usefully, it identifies trends in the broader funding environment for multilateral institutions, including the decrease in attention and funding for disarmament over the past two decades; diminished funding for international issues and public goods; increased earmarking of funds; and greater focus on work that qualifies as official development assistance.

43. While the assessment discusses a range of funding options, it also shows that not all of them are feasible. A major endowment to a United Nations entity from an individual or private organization is unlikely; and a fee-based service model runs contrary to the mandate to promote the informed participation of all Member States in disarmament. This leaves two primary sources of funding as described below.

1. Voluntary funds

44. Notwithstanding the difficult budgetary environment, UNIDIR continues to mobilize voluntary funds that make up around 90 per cent of its annual income. The assessment illustrates the relatively small donor base of this funding, with five European Member States providing 75 per cent of contributions from 2014 to 2016. Funds provided to UNIDIR are limited in scale, duration and predictability, and the

overwhelming majority of these funds are earmarked for specific projects. Notwithstanding calls from the General Assembly for unearmarked contributions, with a few notable exceptions,[6] Member States' funding patterns illustrate increased preference for earmarked contributions. The consequences and risks of this situation for UNIDIR are clearly spelled out in the assessment and have been articulated in debates on UNIDIR financing over nearly four decades.

45. While in the short term there may be limited potential for changes in the broader international funding environment, there are indications of increased interest among Governments, researchers and civil society on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament issues. In the light of current risks, including the potential use of nuclear weapons and the repeated use of chemical weapons to horrific effect, there is growing concern over new weapons technologies and greater focus on how violence, and the means therefor, are thwarting the development of countries and people. This assumption lies behind the launch of the agenda for disarmament, the progress of which depends on the political and financial support of Member States. It is important that UNIDIR take advantage of this increased interest and, through active outreach and substantive policy-relevant products, demonstrate the added value it brings in stimulating ideas and supporting deliberations on disarmament and international security.

46. On the basis of a clear strategic plan that incorporates multi-year programming, UNIDIR should take concerted steps to expand its donor base to include non-traditional donors and appropriate private foundations.

47. Member States are encouraged to reassess their approach to UNIDIR and to give serious consideration to the establishment of framework agreements with UNIDIR and the provision of unearmarked or softly earmarked, for example, programmatic-level, funding. The support of current funders is needed for the Institute's fundraising efforts, including through outreach to, and joint funding partnerships with, other Member States. They are also encouraged to explore opportunities to consider how unspent or underspent project funds might be redirected to institutional operating costs where feasible. Those Member States that are not in a position to provide financial support, are encouraged to explore possible options for in-kind support, including the hosting of UNIDIR events, facilitation of partnerships with relevant research institutes in their countries and provision of facilities as appropriate. The group of friends of UNIDIR, which has been generously facilitated by France since November 2014, could potentially serve as an informal forum for engagement on resource mobilization and its members are encouraged to consider how the group of friends format might be optimized.

2. Subvention from the regular budget

48. The United Nations subvention from the regular budget is the only consistent source of funding for UNIDIR. As the assessment indicates, the subvention has remained largely constant since 2000 in absolute terms but its relative value has decreased: in 2017 it constituted 9 per cent of the annual budget as compared to 29 per cent in 2000. It does not cover the current costs of a Director at the D-2 level, much less any additional UNIDIR staff or institutional functions. All other costs of the Institute, direct and indirect, are covered through funds voluntarily received for individual research projects and a very small number of unearmarked contributions.

[6] In the first six months of 2018, Lebanon, New Zealand, Pakistan and the Philippines provided unearmarked contributions to UNIDIR, while Sweden committed to provide softly earmarked funds over a two-year period.

49. Even accounting for the deliberate ambiguity in the language of the UNIDIR statute, the current imbalance between voluntary and regular budget funding would appear to run counter to the spirit of the Institute's founding document. Moreover, were the General Assembly, Member States and disarmament bodies, notably the Conference on Disarmament, to tally the number of UNIDIR publications, workshops, side events and briefings which they have requested, availed themselves of, or participated in, over the past 18 years alone, it becomes clear that the Institute is grossly underresourced for the services it provides to Member States over and above the conduct of voluntarily funded research projects and contracted expert consultancies. Years of successive internal, and now external, assessments have reached a similar conclusion regarding the need and justification for an increase in the regular budget subvention to UNIDIR. The Board has made similarly consistent and persistent appeals to the Assembly.

50 This decades-long debate is coming to fruition in a politically divided and budget constrained environment. Consensus on existing funding obligations is limited and there is little appetite to consider new funding commitments. A number of targeted recommendations for a possible increase in the subvention to UNIDIR are offered below, moving away from a focus on staff funding and addressing, instead, support for the functions and services that Member States consider priorities for UNIDIR to accountably and sustainably provide.

51. Member States are encouraged to make an annual subvention to UNIDIR as part of the revised regular budget cycle. This subvention should:

(a) Fully cover the salary and related costs of the Institute's Director so as to ensure the independence, impartiality and accountability of UNIDIR leadership to the full membership;

(b) Cover the costs of at least one additional Professional post to represent the Institute, serve as certifying officer and report to the Board in the absence and/or incapacitation of the Director and to assist the Director in all management and administrative functions;

(c) Provide resources for the provision of quarterly briefings on research and ideas of relevant disarmament topics to all regional groupings and, as further requested by Member States, with a view to supporting the informed participation of all Member States in disarmament deliberations;

(d) Enable UNIDIR to organize at least three events in non-OECD countries to promote disarmament and non-proliferation knowledge, ideas and dialogue to a broader and more diverse community.

IV. Conclusion

52. The debate on the operating and financing models of UNIDIR is as old as the Institute itself. Despite their different provenance and focus, most assessments of the options for a more stable and sustainable foundation for UNIDIR have arrived at similar conclusions. The independent third-party assessment conducted in 2018, the most comprehensive one to date, makes a number of important additional observations and recommendations to enhance the role and effectiveness of UNIDIR as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations. The assessment also concludes that the Institute's long-term sustainability requires an increase in its subvention from the regular budget, as well as changes in the modalities of the voluntary funds it receives from Member States. Ultimately, this assessment underscores the risks of over-reliance on small-scale project funding for the

credibility and impartiality of UNIDIR and, thus its unique status within the United Nations disarmament machinery.

53. There are sufficient new elements and opportunities to overcome the obstacles that have prevented progress to date. Arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament concerns are returning to greater prominence on the international political and security agenda. While this is largely a result of negative developments, it offers an opportunity to revisit and reframe disarmament institutions and processes, with a view to finding solutions to old and new problems. The agenda for disarmament can provide some options and ways forward, and together with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, I welcome every opportunity to advance dialogue and practical action among Member States as well as the wider disarmament community. I am heartened by the support and expertise received from the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and the engagement of many Member States, civil society and other actors in generating new momentum on disarmament. UNIDIR has a critical role to play in this necessarily multilayered effort, particularly in stimulating new ideas and solutions, and resolving the Institute's unstable funding and operating situation could offer a tangible demonstration that such momentum exists.

54. The measures set out in the present report require actions from many: UNIDIR leadership and staff, the Board, the Secretariat, Member States, donors and the General Assembly. It will require a collective effort and sustained dialogue among all stakeholders. I am grateful for the work and support of the offices and staff involved in this exercise and express my appreciation to the consultant for the thoroughness of its work.

55. The present report, like the assessment itself, was commissioned in a resolution marking the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR. It is my sincere hope that, by the time the four decades of the Institute's work are celebrated in 2020, significant steps will have been taken to resolve the question of the sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model required to achieve the mandate and objectives of UNIDIR. I look forward to exploring practical ways forward with Member States during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

United Nations A/73/285

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 29 of the provisional agenda*
Advancement of women

Intensifying efforts to end obstetric fistula within a generation

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 71/169. Obstetric fistula is a devastating childbirth injury that leaves women and girls incontinent and often stigmatized and isolated from their families and communities. It is a stark outcome of gender inequalities, the denial of human rights and poor access to sexual and reproductive health services, including maternal and newborn care, and an indication of high levels of maternal death and disability. The report outlines efforts made by the international community at the global, regional and national levels to end obstetric fistula and offers recommendations to intensify those efforts, with a human rights-based approach, so as to end obstetric fistula within a generation. Ending fistula is an integral component of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Improving maternal health, strengthening health systems, reducing health inequities and increasing the level and predictability of funding are crucial to ensure no one is left behind.

* A/73/150.

** The present report was submitted after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/169, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it, at its seventy-third session, on the implementation of the resolution under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

2. Poor sexual and reproductive health remains a leading cause of disability and death for women of childbearing age worldwide. Obstetric fistula, severe maternal morbidity as a result of prolonged obstructed labour without the mother's having timely access to an emergency caesarean section, is fully preventable when women and girls have access to high-quality and comprehensive health services. Though much progress has been made to address fistula, interventions have often failed to reach those most in need. The provision of quality care is uneven, and the rights and dignity of those who seek it are often not respected. Owing to inequities in their access to health care, many women suffer from unintended pregnancy, maternal death and disability, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and cervical cancer. Educating and empowering women and girls is crucial for their well-being and for improving maternal health and preventing fistula. Economic and sociocultural factors that negatively affect women must be addressed, including by educating and engaging men and boys and empowering communities. To ensure that all women and girls, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, have adequate access to health care, efforts must be intensified and urgent steps taken.

II. Background

3. Ending obstetric fistula is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and fundamental to improving maternal and newborn health. Worldwide, an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 women develop fistula annually and approximately 2 million women currently live with fistula, which is a burden in almost 60 countries. Its occurrence is a violation of human rights and a reminder of gross inequities. Although preventable and virtually non-existent in developed countries, fistula continues to afflict many poor women and girls worldwide who lack access to health services. Scaling up national capacity to provide access to comprehensive emergency obstetric care, treat fistula cases and address the underlying health, socioeconomic, cultural and human rights determinants is fundamental to eliminating fistula.

4. Obstetric fistula can be a devastating lifelong morbidity if left untreated, with severe medical, social, psychological and economic consequences. Approximately 90 per cent of women who develop fistula deliver a stillborn baby.[1] A woman with fistula is not only left incontinent, but may also experience neurological disorders, orthopaedic injury, bladder infections, painful sores, kidney failure or infertility. The odour from constant leakage, combined with misperceptions about its cause, often results in stigma and ostracism. The resulting isolation may affect the woman's mental health, leading to depression, low self-esteem and even suicide. Many women live with the condition for years and suffer in silence. They are often abandoned by their husbands and families and find it difficult to secure income or support, thereby deepening their poverty.

5. Women with fistula are evidence of the failure of health systems to deliver accessible, timely, quality intrapartum care. Health-care costs can be prohibitive and catastrophic for poor families, especially when complications occur. These factors

[1] Saifuddin Ahmed, Erin Anastasi and Laura Laski, "Double burden of tragedy: stillbirth and obstetric fistula", *The Lancet Global Health Comment*, vol. 4, No. 2 (February 2016).

contribute to the three categories of delay that impede women's access to care: (a) delay in seeking care; (b) delay in arriving at a health-care facility; and (c) delay in receiving appropriate, high-quality care once at the facility.[2] A lack of awareness of the availability of treatment for fistula and the high cost of getting that treatment also constitute major barriers to care. Sustainable solutions for ending obstetric fistula therefore require well-functioning health systems, well-trained health professionals, access to and supply of essential medicines and equipment and equitable access to high-quality health services, along with community empowerment.

6. Poverty, sociocultural barriers, gender inequality, illiteracy, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, inadequate access to and utilization of sexual and reproductive health services and marginalization are the root causes of maternal mortality and morbidity. To address fistula, countries must ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services; address socioeconomic inequities; prevent child marriage and early childbearing; promote universal education, especially for girls; eliminate gender-based violence; and promote and protect the human rights of women and girls.

7. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among girls between the ages of 15 and 19 years in many low-income and middle-income countries. Approximately one in five girls globally will be married before the age of 18.[3] Child marriage and early pregnancy, particularly in underresourced settings, put girls at risk for mortality and morbidity, including fistula. Impoverished and marginalized girls are more likely to be subjected to child marriage and become pregnant than girls who have greater educational and economic opportunities.[4] All adolescent girls and boys, both in and out of school, need access to education, information, and health services to protect their well-being.

8. The three most cost-effective interventions to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, including fistula, are: (a) timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric and newborn care; (b) the presence of trained health professionals with midwifery skills at childbirth; and (c) universal access to family planning.

9. Most fistula cases can be treated through surgery, after which women and girls can be reintegrated into their communities with appropriate psychosocial, medical, and economic support, to restore their well-being and dignity. However, unmet needs for fistula treatment remain very high. Though progress has been made to strengthen national capacities to treat fistula, few health-care facilities are able to provide high-quality fistula surgery, owing to inadequate numbers of health-care professionals with the necessary skills, as well as a lack of essential equipment and medical supplies. When services are available, many women are not aware of them or cannot afford or access them because of barriers, such as transportation costs. Given the current rates of treatment relative to the existing backlog of cases, and the unfortunate occurrence of new ones, many women and girls with fistula will die without receiving treatment.

[2] Sereen Thaddeus and Deborah Maine, "Too far to walk: maternal mortality in context", *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 38, No. 8 (April 1994).

[3] United Nations Children's Fund, "Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before ages 15 and 18", Child Marriage database (March 2018).

[4] Quentin T. Wodon and others, *Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Global Synthesis Report* (Washington, D.C., World Bank and International Center for Research on Women, 2017).

III. Initiatives taken at the global, regional and national levels

A. Major global initiatives

10. In the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, adopted in Cairo in 1994, maternal health was recognized as a key component of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. In his report on the framework of action for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, the Secretary-General highlighted that obstetric fistula "represents the face of failure as a global community to protect the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls" (see A/69/62, para. 384). In 2018, the Commission on the Status of Women reiterated how disparities in the access of rural women to health care, coupled with their limited power over their lives, resulted in higher rates of obstetric fistula and maternal and newborn mortality.

11. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is aimed at transforming the world through the achievement of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda commits to eliminating poverty, achieving gender equality and securing health and well-being for all, thus eliminating obstetric fistula will contribute to achieving many of the Goals.

12. The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030)[5] is a key tool in the fight to end fistula. It is aimed at ending preventable maternal and newborn mortality, reducing the rate of global maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births (target 3.1) and supporting countries in implementing the Goals. Along with the accompanying operational framework adopted by the sixty-ninth World Health Assembly, in 2016, it places strong emphasis on national leadership and strengthening accountability through the monitoring of national progress and strengthening capacity to collect, analyse and use data. It underscores the importance of developing a sustainable, evidence-based, health financing strategy, strengthening health systems and building strategic multisectoral partnerships.

13. In 2015, the World Health Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution on "Strengthening emergency and essential surgical care and anaesthesia as a component of universal health coverage", calling for access to emergency and essential surgery for all, including to prevent and treat obstetric fistula. During the 2015 meeting in Geneva of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Initiative for Emergency and Essential Surgical Care, a road map towards the implementation of the resolution was drafted. Following up on the resolution, at the recent seventieth World Health Assembly, held in 2018, a two-year report was presented and a decision adopted calling for continued reporting at least every two years.

14. In 2016, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/169, in which it called for intensified efforts for eliminating obstetric fistula. Building on the previous resolutions, adopted in 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014, Member States reaffirmed their obligation to promote and protect the rights of all women and girls and to strive to end fistula, including by supporting the Campaign to End Fistula. Fistula was first acknowledged by the General Assembly in 2007 as a major women's health issue, with the adoption of resolution 62/138.

15. On 23 May 2016, in observance of the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula, the United Nations declared a bold new vision through a call to end fistula

[5] WHO and others, *Survive, Thrive, Transform: Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030) — 2018 Monitoring Report: Current Status and Strategic Priorities* (Geneva, WHO, 2018).

within a generation. This was enshrined in the Secretary-General's report on intensifying efforts to end fistula (see A/71/306) and General Assembly resolution 71/169, as part of the United Nations agenda for the advancement of women.

B. Major regional initiatives

16. A number of regional initiatives have been developed, assessed and strengthened to respond to global and regional commitments to end obstetric fistula as part of the broader maternal and newborn health agenda.

17. The Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality in Africa, launched in 2009, promotes intensified implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2007–2010)[6] and the Africa Health Strategy. In 2017, the African Union announced an extension of the Campaign until 2030. Forty-six countries in the region have launched the Campaign and implemented it within their national road maps to accelerate the reduction in maternal mortality, and included maternal, newborn and child health in their poverty reduction strategies and health plans; 35 of those countries also developed operational plans for maternal and newborn health at the district level.[7] Some countries, including the Congo and Eritrea, have undertaken interventions in fistula prevention and treatment as part of their campaigns. Findings from an evaluation of the Campaign in 2017 indicated its success in mobilizing and increasing efforts by countries and stakeholders to improve maternal and child health and promote women's rights, an essential strategy for ending fistula. Despite the achievements of the Campaign, there is still a need to scale up advocacy and mobilize stakeholders for the reduction of maternal and newborn mortality.

18. In May 2018, the African Union task force for maternal, newborn and child health called for a declaration by Heads of State and Government on ending obstetric fistula and female genital mutilation. The task force recommended utilizing advocacy platforms and reporting mechanisms, including the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality in Africa and campaigns against child marriage to strengthen accountability on continental commitments and accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation and fistula.

19. Recognizing the elimination of fistula as key to harnessing the demographic dividend and women's empowerment in West and Central Africa, a strategy on eliminating fistula in West and Central Africa for 2018–2021 was developed with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). A costed resource mobilization strategy for ending fistula was also developed, but has not yet been implemented owing to funding constraints. Strong regional and technical partnerships are required to mobilize available resources.

20. In 2017, the first ladies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), at a forum in the Niger, committed to eliminating obstetric fistula,

[6] In 2015, a review of implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2007–2010 was undertaken. While progress has been made in implementing the plan of action, resources remain very limited, with few countries allocating funds for sexual and reproductive health. Subsequently, two key continental policy frameworks were negotiated for extension 2016–2030, to address sexual and reproductive health, including fistula.

[7] United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Accelerating progress towards MDG 5", 2014; and Triphonie Nkurunziza and others, "Progress report on the road map for accelerating the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals relating to maternal and newborn health in Africa", *African Health Monitor*, No. 18 (November 2013).

female genital mutilation and violence against women and youths. Implementing this commitment includes improving the capacity of health facilities for fistula treatment, allocating financial resources to create awareness and supporting economic and social reintegration of fistula survivors into their local community. The first ladies called for ECOWAS member States to allocate 3 per cent of their national budgets to implement action plans on child protection and the elimination of female genital mutilation and fistula and to define harmonized indicators on fistula in their national health information systems.[8] Further to a call to action made by UNFPA, ECOWAS, the West African Health Organization (WAHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and EngenderHealth in Banjul in March 2018, the nineteenth Ordinary Assembly of the Health Ministers of ECOWAS adopted, in June 2018, a resolution on eliminating obstetric fistula in the ECOWAS region.

21. The Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project is a joint response by the United Nations and the World Bank Group to a call made by the Presidents of the six Sahel countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. Since the launch, in 2015, of the $207 million initiative, national programmes that promote fistula prevention, including those focusing on generating demand for maternal and newborn health, empowering women and girls, preventing early marriages, keeping girls in school and increasing the availability of trained health workers, including midwives, are well under way.

22. In 2017, in Maputo, an East and Southern Africa dialogue on eradicating obstetric fistula, exploring collaboration between the safe surgery and fistula communities, was organized by the Fistula Care Plus Project, led by EngenderHealth. Simultaneously, the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa International Scientific Conference was held in Mozambique, as was the seventh biennial meeting of the WHO Global Initiative for Emergency and Essential Surgical Care.

23. Recognizing that fistula continues to contribute to significant morbidity and suffering of women and girls in the Asia-Pacific region, the South Asian Group on Female Genital Fistula was launched in Kathmandu in 2017. Dedicated to the 2016 United Nations vision to end fistula within a generation, the Group includes representatives of the International Society of Obstetric Fistula Surgeons, the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, UNFPA, the Campaign to End Fistula, WHO, the South Asian Federation of Urogynecology, the International Urogynecological Association, the EngenderHealth Fistula Care Plus project and the national societies of obstetricians and gynaecologists of Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. In its Kathmandu call to action for a fistula-free South Asia, the Group called upon Governments, civil society organizations, professional bodies, health professionals, development partners and key stakeholders to enhance the capacity of national health systems, and also called upon academic institutions to strengthen academic, credentialled training for obstetric and iatrogenic fistula prevention and treatment and to support research and knowledge management to advance women's health.

24. In the Arab States region, UNFPA and partners built national capacities on the minimum initial service package for reproductive health to ensure the delivery of quality reproductive health services in fragile and humanitarian contexts; conducted a Sustainable Development Goals-readiness analysis of health systems to respond to reproductive health-related targets in four Arab countries; generated evidence on health system gaps to strengthen health systems and help reach Sustainable Development Goal targets; conducted comprehensive maternal death surveillance and

[8] Economic Community of West African States, "First ladies move to eliminate obstetric fistula and protect child rights in West Africa", 10 October 2017.

response assessments in five Arab countries; and conducted assessments on the integration of reproductive health services into primary health care in six Arab countries.

25. In order to build national capacity and sustainability and increase access to fistula treatment, South-South cooperation is a key strategy. UNFPA and the Campaign to End Fistula partners have supported skilled fistula surgeons and surgical teams from all regions of the world through training and mentoring to provide treatment in the highest burden fistula countries.

C. Major national initiatives

26. Although countries are making progress in reducing maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, the injustice of fistula persists. The global maternal mortality ratio decreased by 44 per cent from 1990 to 2015 and the number of maternal deaths fell, in the same period, from 532,000 per year to 303,000 per year,[9] yet an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 new cases of fistula still occur every year.[10] Notwithstanding the remarkable gains made in reducing the number of maternal and newborn deaths and disabilities, major challenges still need to be addressed.

27. Government ownership and leadership of national programmes aimed at eliminating fistula are crucial to tackling the problem. Countries need to allocate a greater proportion of their national budgets to health, with additional technical and financial support provided by the international community. Data collected by UNFPA indicate that at least 23 out of the almost 60 countries affected by obstetric fistula have national strategies for its elimination, and 13 of them (namely, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Uganda) have costed, time-bound operational plans. In additional, more than 30 countries have established national fistula task forces that serve as coordinating and monitoring mechanisms for Government and partner activities.

28. Several countries employ innovative approaches to raise awareness and increase access to fistula treatment. Telephone hotlines continue to provide information about fistula treatment in Burundi (in partnership with Médecins sans frontières), Cambodia, Kenya, Malawi and Sierra Leone, using mobile phones to connect women living in remote locations to medical care. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the mobile phone-based money transfer microfinancing service known as M-PESA, established in 2009, continues to cover the upfront transportation costs of impoverished fistula patients, giving them access to fistula surgery. That service, as well as those sponsored by the Freedom from Fistula Foundation in Malawi and Sierra Leone, also provides free accommodation and meals before and after surgery, thereby addressing major barriers to accessing fistula treatment. In Ethiopia and Malawi, "fistula/safe motherhood ambassadors", former patients who have undergone training in community awareness on fistula, are now also patient recruiters, educating pregnant women, escorting new patients for treatment and speaking to rural communities about how to prevent fistula and obtain care. Many initiatives are under way for improved data collection to track patient outcome and improve surgical practice.

29. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, Haiti has increased its commitment to ending fistula. Key steps taken by the Government, with support from UNFPA and partners, include: organizing a panel of experts to assess and address the problem of

[9] WHO, *Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2015 — Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division* (Geneva, 2015).

[10] WHO, "Obstetric fistula", 19 February 2018.

fistula in Haiti, with the goal of developing a response plan for the country to reduce the incidence of fistula;[11] conducting a situation analysis on fistula; establishing an integrated response to complications during childbirth (including strengthening health professionals' capacity, training/education, diagnosis, referral and treatment of fistula); developing a national strategy on fistula; conducting an awareness campaign, including community outreach; and mobilizing resources to establish a functional fistula repair unit.

30. In 2017, the Rohingya refugee crisis intensified, bringing to the fore the need for emergency obstetric and newborn care, as well as skilled attendants at birth, for refugee women and girls in crisis. In Bangladesh, UNFPA and the Hope Foundation provide emergency transport for pregnant Rohingya refugees in remote areas so they can reach health facilities in time. Through the implementation of the minimum initial service package for reproductive health, refugees had access to emergency obstetric and neonatal care. In 2017, 100 midwives deployed to humanitarian situations screened 110,000 women and girls, distributed some 4,000 clean delivery kits, conducted more than 30,000 antenatal care check-ups, 3,000 post-natal care check-ups and 1,300 deliveries in facilities, and referred over 200 obstetric emergencies, thus contributing to saving maternal and newborn lives and averting fistula. Fistula clients identified among the refugees received treatment and care, through the support of the Hope Foundation, the Fistula Foundation and UNFPA. In 2017, Bangladesh disseminated its costed national strategy on fistula and established its first urogynaecology centre to provide evidence-based, high-quality clinical care for women suffering from fistula.[12]

31. In order to increase access to critically needed care, the Fistula Foundation, with partners, has, since 2009, supported 31 countries in conducting over 31,700 fistula surgeries in Africa and in the Arab States region. In 2014, the Fistula Foundation, in collaboration with Astellas Pharma Europe, launched a three-year programme in Kenya called "Action for Fistula", which established an integrated network of six fistula treatment facilities nationwide, trained six surgeons, engaged in culturally sensitive countrywide outreach to educate women on the availability of treatment and built the Gynocare Women's and Fistula Hospital, the first major certified fistula surgeon training site in the country, creating a regional hub for training in fistula surgery. By 2016, outreach efforts had resulted in 514,115 persons having been reached with information[13] and by 2017, over 3,400 women had received life-changing surgery.[14]

32. In 2018, in order to create awareness on obstetric fistula and mobilize resources for treatment, Ghana and UNFPA launched the 100 in 100 Initiative to repair 100 fistulas in 100 days. The Initiative contributes to the implementation of the country's prevention and management strategy on fistula, launched in 2017, and emphasizes prevention as key to ending fistula. A national fistula fund was established in 2017, in partnership with the private sector. The country established the Ghana College of Nurses and Midwives to increase the skills and knowledge of midwives so as to improve the availability of and access to quality maternal health services and to reduce the incidence of maternal mortality and morbidity.

[11] The panel, which met on the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (23 May), was organized by the Direction de la sante de la famille and UNFPA and included experts from the Association of Urologists, the Society of Obstetricians of Haiti, Zanmi Lansante, Direction de la sante de la famille, the Association of Midwives, Institut national superior de formation sage femme and UNFPA Haiti.

[12] UNFPA, "UNFPA Bangladesh annual report 2017: key results towards leaving no one behind", May 2018.

[13] Fistula Foundation, "2016 annual report".

[14] Fistula Foundation, "2017 annual report".

IV. Action taken by the international community: the progress made and the immense challenges ahead

A. Prevention strategies and interventions to achieve maternal and newborn health and eliminate obstetric fistula

33. In 2003, UNFPA and partners launched the Campaign to End Fistula, aimed at eradicating fistula globally. The Campaign focuses on four key strategies: prevention, treatment, social reintegration and advocacy. It is active in over 50 countries in the Africa, Asia, Arab and Latin America and Caribbean regions and brings together nearly 100 partners at the global level and many more at the national, regional and community levels. UNFPA leads the Campaign and serves as the secretariat of the International Obstetric Fistula Working Group, the main decision-making body of the Campaign. Since launching the Campaign, UNFPA has directly supported over 100,000 fistula repairs, and partners such as EngenderHealth, the Fistula Foundation, the Freedom from Fistula Foundation, the United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU), Focus Fistula, Women and Health Alliance International and the Kupona Foundation, have supported thousands more. In 2017, UNFPA and the Campaign were awarded the UNFCU Women's Empowerment Award in appreciation for the global leadership of UNFPA and the Campaign's transformative impact on reducing inequities and its action for a new global agenda grounded in principles of rights, inclusiveness, and equality.[15]

34. Preventing fistula is key. Midwives play a vital role in saving maternal and newborn lives and preventing morbidity, by providing high-quality skilled delivery care. Midwives and nurse-midwives who are educated and regulated to international standards can provide 87 per cent of the essential care needed for women, adolescents and newborns and can make a unique contribution owing to the fact that their competencies cover the whole continuum of sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and adolescent health care, from pre-pregnancy through antenatal care, care during childbirth and postnatal services. Since 2008, UNFPA has supported a global initiative to educate and train midwives in over 125 countries. Between 2014 and 2017, UNFPA supported pre-service education and in-service training of 47,000 midwives in 39 countries with the highest burden of maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity. In 2016 and 2017, over 5,000 midwives were trained in identifying and managing prolonged, obstructed labour using innovative multimedia e-learning module, developed in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics and the Intel Corporation, based on WHO guidelines. In many countries, midwives are sensitized to, and trained on, fistula prevention and management through in-service training. Over 83 countries have aligned their midwifery curriculum to the global standards of the International Confederation of Midwives, and 30 countries have integrated fistula into their midwifery curriculum. Efforts are under way to ensure that the overall availability of midwives is increased so that their services are available where they are most needed.

35. Universal, accessible and high-quality health care has helped eliminate obstetric fistula in developed countries. The initiative entitled "Every Newborn: an action plan for ending preventable deaths",[16] led by WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and partners, calls for universal coverage of high-quality care with innovation, accountability and data; leadership, governance, partnerships and

[15] Campaign to End Fistula, "UNFCU Foundation awards UNFPA-led campaign to end fistula coordinator", 20 November 2017.

[16] See WHO and UNICEF, *Every Newborn: An Action Plan to End Preventable Deaths* (Geneva, WHO, 2014)

financing; and a review of global and national goals, targets and milestones for the period 2014–2035. This initiative also helps to eliminate preventable maternal death and morbidity, including fistula. In 2017, 75 countries completed the Every Newborn tracking tool, showing an overall improvement across all national milestones and demonstrating country-level commitment to achieving the milestones in the action plan.

36. Ensuring that all women have access to quality health care is critical to preventing and ending fistula. The Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, launched in 2017 by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and partners, supports countries in improving maternal and newborn health. Poor quality of care increases the risk of fistula and is an affront to human rights. Established on the pillars of quality, equity and dignity and supported by a quality of care framework and standards for improving the quality of maternal and newborn care in health facilities, the Network was launched in nine countries (Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania), aiming to halve the rates of maternal and newborn death and stillbirth in targeted health-care facilities within five years.

37. The H6 Partnership harnesses the collective strengths of UNFPA, UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World Bank Group to advance the "Every Woman, Every Child" global strategy and support national leadership and action for the health of women, adolescents and children. Since 2008, H6 partners have helped countries strengthen their health systems and improve health services for women, children and newborns in places where they were dying at an alarming rate from preventable causes. The Partnership enhances technical support, policy engagement, advocacy and investment, minimizes overlap and duplication of interventions and deepens collaboration to improve sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health outcomes.

38. Universal access to family planning contributes to saving women's lives and improving their health by preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing the number of abortions, facilitating the timing and spacing of pregnancies to maximize their health and that of their babies and lowering the incidence of death and disability related to complications of pregnancy and childbirth, including fistula. Family planning may also contribute to reducing the risk of recurrence of fistula in future pregnancies. Yet, over 200 million women and adolescent girls' needs for family planning are still unmet. Family Planning 2020, a global partnership initiative that is focused in 69 countries, supports the empowerment of women and girls and promotes their right to voluntarily obtain safe family planning services. The UNFPA Supplies programme, the only United Nations thematic fund for family planning, is pivotal to the achievement of the goals of Family Planning 2020. The programme is driving progress to meet unmet needs and is the world's largest provider of donated contraceptives. The 46 countries receiving focused support from the programme have increased the number of women and adolescent girls using modern contraception by 17.9 million since 2012. Contraceptives provided by UNFPA in 2017 prevented 6.2 million pregnancies, prevented 15,500 maternal deaths and averted 1.7 million abortions.[17]

39. Women living with or recovering from fistula are often "invisible", neglected and stigmatized. Many women and girls who develop fistula will die without ever receiving treatment, and the condition can recur in women whose fistula has been surgically treated but who receive little or no medical follow-up and become pregnant again. As called for in General Assembly resolution 71/169, Governments of

[17] UNFPA, *UNFPA Annual Report 2017: I Have the Power to Change My World* (New York, 2018).

countries affected by fistula should designate obstetric fistula as a nationally notifiable condition, triggering immediate reporting, tracking and follow-up. Developing and strengthening systematic registration and tracking mechanisms at the community and facility levels for each woman and girl who has or has had an obstetric fistula and recording those cases in a national register is crucial. Such actions can help prevent the recurrence of fistula and ensure the survival and well-being of mothers and newborns in subsequent pregnancies. Tracking cases will also make data available to inform programmes to provide the needed support for women with fistula who are deemed inoperable or incurable.

40. Raising awareness and sensitizing and mobilizing communities are vital strategies for the prevention of fistula and maternal and newborn death and disability. Fistula survivors are key advocates and champions in this effort. Organizations such as the Fistula Foundation in Nigeria, the Freedom from Fistula Foundation in Malawi, Healing Hands of Joy in Ethiopia, One By One in Kenya and the Association for the Rehabilitation and Reorientation of Women for Development in Uganda train former fistula patients as safe motherhood ambassadors who educate women, families and communities about maternal and newborn care and safe delivery; identify and refer fistula survivors for treatment; and provide psychosocial support, thereby breaking the cycle of isolation and suffering. The organizations also help reintegrate fistula survivors through interventions including literacy, life skills, and microloan and/or savings programmes that provide economic opportunities for women and their families to rebuild their lives and livelihoods and reclaim their dignity and agency.

B. Treatment strategies and interventions

41. Tragically, only a fraction of the estimated 2 million women and girls in need of fistula treatment actually receive it. While progress has been made globally to increase access to care, such access is vastly insufficient, owing to many factors, including a lack of funding to support the mobilization and treatment of fistula patients and the scarcity of surgeons. The International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, the International Society of Obstetric Fistula Surgeons and the Fistula Foundation are implementing a competency-based fistula surgery training programme to expand global treatment capacity. Over 60 surgeons from 22 countries affected by fistula are involved in the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics programme. Still, a dramatic and sustainable scaling-up of quality treatment services and trained, competent fistula surgeons is needed to address the unmet need for fistula repair and help to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

42. The Fistula Care Plus project, led by EngenderHealth and funded by USAID, expands access to fistula services and builds an evidence base for ending fistula. The project built a global database to monitor and manage fistula programme data using a health management information system, a platform adopted by over 40 national Governments. In 2016 and 2017, the project trained 24 fistula surgeons and over 1,300 health workers to build sustainable fistula repair capacity and 850 community volunteers in tools and approaches to raise awareness regarding fistula. The project also supported the development of national guidelines on catheterization for fistula treatment and prevention in Nigeria and collaborated with WHO to conduct a study to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of health systems and the post-surgery recovery of fistula patients for their overall health and well-being.[18]

[18] Mark A. Barone and others, "Breakdown of simple female genital fistula repair after 7-day versus 14-day postoperative bladder catheterization: a randomized, controlled, open-label, non-inferiority trial", *The Lancet*, vol. 386, No. 9988 (July 2015).

43. In order to promote the evidence-based care of fistula patients, in 2017 WHO produced a new guideline that established the length of time required for effective catheterization after the surgical repair of simple obstetric urinary fistula as 7 to 10 days. This procedure can be done by a trained surgeon, with direct positive health and cost implications in low-income and middle-income countries. [19]

44. To foster an enabling environment for fistula treatment and care, the International Society of Obstetric Fistula Surgeons and UNFPA developed fistula repair kits with the supplies necessary to perform fistula repair surgery, thereby promoting increased access to quality fistula treatment and care. Through partnership with Johnson & Johnson, high-quality sutures were integrated into the kits in 2015, reducing the cost of each kit. In 2016 and 2017, UNFPA procured 886 of those kits for use at fistula repair facilities.

C. Reintegration strategies and interventions

45. Beyond the medical and surgical treatment for obstetric fistula, a holistic approach that addresses the psychosocial and socioeconomic needs of survivors is required to ensure full recovery and healing from fistula. The follow-up of fistula patients is a major gap in the continuum of care. Tragically, only a fraction of needy fistula patients is offered reintegration services. All countries affected by fistula should track this indicator to ensure access to reintegration services. According to data collected by UNFPA in 2017, at least 27 countries have put in place mechanisms to follow up with survivors after treatment, a critical aspect of healing and successful reintegration. Intensive social reintegration of women and girls whose cases are deemed to be inoperable or incurable also remains a major gap; as these women endure significant social challenges, an individualized approach, tailored to their specific needs, is required to facilitate their reintegration.

46. Reintegration and rehabilitation services must be holistic, comprehensive, continual and available for as long as they are needed. They should include counselling and follow-up throughout all phases of treatment and recovery, from the first point of contact to after the patient's discharge from the hospital, including health education, family planning services, psychosocial services and income-generating activities, which provide livelihood, renewed social connections and a sense of purpose, combined with community sensitization to reduce stigma and discrimination. Psychological support is necessary for all fistula patients, especially those who have not been fully healed.

D. Research, data collection and analysis

47. To further the vision of reducing maternal deaths to fewer than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030, which would also serve to prevent fistula, the Lancet, in a series on maternal health in 2016, recommended investments to strengthen health systems, including in the areas of data and surveillance systems, facility capability, associated emergency medical services and the development of a skilled health workforce, including midwives, to enable them to respond to the changing contexts of women's lives and make them resilient to shocks and environmental threats to maternal and newborn health.[20]

[19] WHO, "Short period of postoperative bladder catheterization effective for repair of simple urinary fistula", 11 January 2018.

[20] "Executive summary", *The Lancet* Maternal Health Series (September 2016).

48. Progress has been made in improving the availability of data, including the development and application of a standardized fistula module for inclusion in demographic and health surveys in an increasing number of countries. The Global Fistula Map continues to be enhanced and expanded, and it provides a snapshot of the landscape of fistula treatment capacity and gaps worldwide. However, the collection of fistula data from countries remains a challenge. Recommendations have been made to integrate the routine surveillance and monitoring of fistula into national health systems, instead of the data being conducted through small independent studies.[21] Yet, obtaining robust and comprehensive data on fistula remains a challenge, given the invisibility of fistula survivors and the lack of priority and resources accorded the issue at the global and national levels.

49. To fill the gap in cost-effective methods for obtaining robust data on fistula, a new model to estimate the global burden of fistula has been developed by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, which is piloting the model to generate global and country-specific estimates of fistula incidence and prevalence. The model will be applied to 55 countries supported by the Campaign to End Fistula in order to produce new global estimates on fistula. The model constitutes a major step forward globally and a vital tool for advancing the planning, implementation and monitoring of efforts towards ending fistula.

50. To strengthen national capacities to collect and analyse data on fistula care, treatment, and outcomes, the innovative Global Obstetric Fistula Electronic Registry was piloted by UNFPA and Operation Fistula in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Malawi, Madagascar and Nepal in 2017 and 2018. Using an evidence-based model piloted in Madagascar from 2013 to 2015 in which patient outcomes improved by assigning patients to surgeons with the skills commensurate with their cases, 454 fistula cases were treated, averting 5,100 disability-adjusted life-years. The Registry was designed to document and improve every interaction between a fistula patient and her care team across the continuum of care, and it uses proven technological tools to provide a platform for surgeons and health-care workers to track reliably and comprehensively the quality of care and treatment. The availability of data will facilitate the establishment of true estimates of fistula incidence and prevalence in those countries.

51. Data-supported and evidence-driven health workforce planning is vital to ending fistula and scaling up midwifery, and represents a cost-effective contribution to improving sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and adolescent health-care outcomes.[22] The Arab States region and the Eastern and Southern Africa region developed regional midwifery reports in 2015 and 2017, respectively, which provide country-specific estimates on essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and adolescent health care services, including the need for and availability of a qualified health workforce. Those data are used by countries to advocate and promote national policies for addressing barriers and challenges to availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of midwifery services.

52. To prevent the occurrence of obstetric fistula, timely access to quality health care, including emergency obstetric services, is of paramount importance. To that end, it is essential to assess the current level of care and provide the evidence needed for planning, monitoring, advocacy and resource mobilization to improve access to quality care and to scale up emergency services in every district. UNFPA, UNICEF,

[21] Ozge Tuncalp and others, "Measuring the incidence and prevalence of obstetric fistula: approaches, needs and recommendations", *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, vol. 93, No. 1 (January 2015).

[22] UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office, *The State of the World's Midwifery: Analysis of the Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Adolescent Health Workforce in East and Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 2017).

WHO and the Averting Maternal Death and Disabilities Programme at Columbia University support emergency obstetric and newborn care needs assessments in countries with high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity. Countries are developing facility networks that will be able to provide essential obstetric and neonatal services, as well as emergency care. Although there has been progress, the availability of such services is still below the international standard of five emergency obstetric and neonatal care facilities per 500,000 inhabitants, owing to a lack of staff and financial barriers. Twelve countries have performed an emergency obstetric and neonatal care needs assessment in 2017 (complete or rapid), and eight countries monitor the availability and quality of those services. Burundi has successfully completed a geographic analysis to manage its emergency obstetric and neonatal care network and estimate population coverage. This new approach has to be scaled up in the future.

53. Maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response, a framework for addressing preventable mortality and morbidity, has been increasingly promoted and institutionalized in several countries. Countries are focusing on increasing the reporting of maternal death, followed by review and corrective action, in order to improve the overall quality of maternal health care and strengthen accountability mechanisms with a view to reducing preventable maternal deaths and disabilities, including fistula.[23] In 2016, WHO strengthened the capacity of and supported 11 countries in South-East Asia in developing five-year plans to implement and expand maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response by 2020.[24]

E. Advocacy and awareness-raising

54. At the global, regional and national levels, powerful stories in the media showing the human face of fistula; influential champions speaking out; and enhanced collaboration and coordination with partners have helped ensure that obstetric fistula is not forgotten. Concerted efforts were made to shine a light on fistula, including through UNFPA, the Campaign to End Fistula and partners, ensuring strong messaging and significant communications activities on fistula and raising awareness and support in high-burden fistula countries and around the world.

55. To highlight the achievements on the path to ending fistula and unite stakeholders to galvanize momentum, in September 2017, UNFPA and the Campaign to End Fistula held a high-level event during the General Assembly entitled "Securing hope, health and dignity for all to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals: ending obstetric fistula within a generation". The event brought, for the first time, the voice of one of the most marginalized and "left behind" groups of fistula survivors to this high-level global forum, represented by Razia Shamshad, of Pakistan. Key champions of ending fistula, including the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations, Christian Braun, a representative from the Ministry of Health of Ghana, Rita Owusu-Amankwah, the President of the United Nations Federal Credit Union Foundation, Pam Agnone, and a Pakistani fistula surgeon and activist, Shershah Syed, all spoke out. The movie Dry was screened, with an introduction by Stephanie Linus, a Nigerian actress and filmmaker, to raise awareness on fistula and advocate proactive measures to combat the condition.

[23] WHO, *Time to Respond: A Report on the Global Implementation of Maternal Death Surveillance and Response* (Geneva, 2016).

[24] WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia, *Strengthening Country Capacity on Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response*, report of a South-East Asia regional meeting, 16–18 February 2016, Maldives (2016).

56. To accelerate the global commitment towards ending fistula, a call to action to develop a global strategy to end fistula within a generation by UNFPA and the International Obstetric Fistula Working Group, led by the Campaign to End Fistula, was published in *The Lancet Global Health* in 2017.[25] The call, issued on 23 May, the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula, builds upon the 2016 United Nations vision, which called for intensified efforts to eradicate fistula and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2018 International Day to End Obstetric Fistula, with the theme "Leaving no one behind: let us commit to ending fistula now!", was commemorated at United Nations Headquarters and around the world. The event provided a platform for advocacy and awareness-raising on how ending obstetric fistula is vital to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 10 and 17.

F. Global need to strengthen financial support

57. A major challenge facing countries is the insufficient level of national financial resources for addressing obstetric fistula, compounded by low levels of development assistance for maternal and newborn health, which have declined in recent years. Contributions to the Campaign to End Fistula have also declined and remain vastly insufficient to meet the current needs. Contributions to the Campaign totalled $1.58 million in 2016, but declined significantly in 2017 (to $450,000). An urgent redoubling of efforts is required to address fistula and redress this neglected issue by intensifying resource mobilization, including the harnessing of domestic resources to support fistula programmes.

58. Efforts to end fistula are integrated into and supported by broader maternal and newborn health initiatives, including the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030), the H6 Partnership, the Muskoka Initiative on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and the Maternal Health Thematic Fund of UNFPA.

59. In 2017 and 2018, contributions to the Campaign to End Fistula included financial commitments from the Governments of Canada, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, the Republic of Korea and Sweden. Additional funds were donated by philanthropic foundations, including Friends of UNFPA, a non-profit organization, the UNFCU Foundation, Zonta International and GE Healthcare, a private sector organization. In-kind contributions were also received from other donors.

60. Financial contributions and strategic activities for the prevention and treatment of fistula have thus far yielded positive results, but far more is needed to eliminate fistula worldwide. Partnerships must be strengthened and financial commitments significantly increased to end fistula within a generation and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

61. In recent years, much progress has been made in focusing attention on obstetric fistula. However, many serious challenges remain. The continued occurrence of fistula highlights the persistence of socioeconomic and gender inequalities and the failure of health-care systems to provide accessible, equitable, high-quality maternal health care, including skilled attendants during childbirth, emergency obstetric care

[25] Erin Anastasi, Lauri Romanzi, Saifuddin Ahmed, Anneka T. Knuttson, Oladosu Ojengbede, Kate Grant (on behalf of the Campaign to End Fistula), "Ending obstetric fistula within a generation: making the dream a reality", *The Lancet Global Health*, vol. 5, No. 8 (August 2017).

and family planning services. It is a human rights violation that the poorest, most vulnerable women and girls suffer needlessly from this devastating condition, which has been virtually eliminated in developed countries. The international community must act urgently to end preventable maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, including through developing a global road map to end fistula within a generation, as part of integrated efforts to strengthen health systems, ensure universal human rights and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

62. Intensified political commitment, national leadership and ownership and greater financial mobilization are urgently needed to accelerate progress towards the elimination of fistula, including by implementing strategies to prevent new cases and treating all existing cases. There is an urgent and ongoing need for committed, multi-year, national, regional and international cooperation and partnership, both public and private, to provide the resources necessary to reach all women and girls suffering from fistula and to ensure sufficient and sustainable elimination efforts. Special attention should be paid to intensifying support to countries with the highest maternal mortality and morbidity levels. This will enable those countries to provide free access to fistula treatment services, given that most fistula survivors are poor and cannot afford treatment.

63. Accelerated efforts are critically needed to improve the health of women and girls globally, with an increased focus on social determinants that affect their well-being, and include the provision of universal education for women and girls; economic empowerment, with access to microcredit, savings and microfinancing; legal reforms; social initiatives, including legal literacy to protect women and girls from violence and discrimination, child marriage and early pregnancy; and the promotion and protection of human rights. Such efforts will ensure the safety and well-being of women and girls and empower them to contribute to their communities.

64. It is essential that universal access to health care, as called for in the Sustainable Development Goals, be integrated into planning and operational processes at the national, regional and international levels in order to end obstetric fistula. There is a global consensus on the key interventions necessary to reduce maternal deaths and disabilities and an urgent need to scale up the three well-known, cost-effective interventions (skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric and neonatal care and family planning services), while emphasizing the crucial role of midwives in reducing the high number of preventable maternal and newborn deaths and disabilities, including fistula.

65. Member States and the international community need to undertake urgently the following critical actions, with a human rights-based approach, to accelerate progress to end obstetric fistula within a generation and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals:

Prevention and treatment strategies and interventions

(a) Invest more into strengthening health-care systems, ensuring well-trained, skilled medical personnel (i.e., midwives, doctors, surgeons, nurses, anaesthetists), and provide support for developing and maintaining infrastructure; such investment is required for referral mechanisms, equipment and supply chains to improve maternal and newborn health services, with functional quality control and monitoring mechanisms in place for all areas of service delivery, and for strengthening the capacity for surgery within the health-care system as part of efforts to achieve universal health coverage;

(b) Develop or strengthen comprehensive multidisciplinary national strategies, policies, action plans and budgets for eliminating obstetric fistula that incorporate prevention, treatment, socioeconomic reintegration and follow-up,

including incorporating fistula into national-level planning, programming and budgeting for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c) Implement and monitor national strategies, policies and action plans to eliminate fistula through strengthened multisectoral approaches;

(d) Establish or strengthen national task forces for fistula, led by ministries of health, to enhance national coordination and improve partner collaboration, including partnering with in-country efforts to increase surgical capacity and promote universal access to essential and life-saving surgery;

(e) Ensure equitable access and coverage, by means of national plans, policies and programmes, to make maternal and newborn health services, in particular emergency obstetric and newborn care, skilled birth attendance, fistula treatment and family planning services financially and culturally accessible, including in the most remote areas;

(f) Make fistula services accessible to all who need them, including through the provision, in strategically selected hospitals, of integrated fistula services that are available continuously and provide the full continuum of holistic care and support for the treatment, rehabilitation and vital follow-up of fistula survivors, and increase the availability of trained and skilled fistula surgeons and that of permanent, holistic fistula services integrated into such hospitals, accompanied by quality assurance to ensure that only skilled fistula surgeons provide treatment to address the significant backlog of women and girls awaiting care;

(g) Ensure universal access to the full continuum of care, particularly in rural and remote areas, through the establishment and distribution of health-care facilities and trained medical personnel, collaboration with the transport sector to provide affordable transport, and the promotion of and support for community-based solutions;

Financial support for universal access to fistula prevention and care

(h) Increase national budgets for health care, ensuring that adequate funds are allocated to universal access to health care, including fistula;

(i) Incorporate, into all sectors of national budgets, policies and programmes to redress inequities and reach poor and vulnerable women and girls, including the provision of free or adequately subsidized maternal and newborn health care and fistula treatment to all those in need;

(j) Enhance international cooperation, including intensified technical and financial support, especially to high-burden countries, to end fistula within a generation;

(k) Mobilize public and private sectors to ensure that needed funding is increased, predictable, sustained and adequate to end fistula within a generation;

Reintegration strategies and interventions

(l) Ensure that all fistula survivors have access to social reintegration services, including counselling, education, skills development, income-generating activities and family and community support;

(m) Ensure that the special needs of women and girls whose cases are deemed to be incurable or inoperable are met;

(n) Develop and strengthen systems and follow-up mechanisms to make fistula a nationally notifiable condition, including indicators to track the health, well-being and reintegration of all fistula survivors;

Advocacy and awareness-raising

(o) Strengthen awareness-raising and advocacy, including through the media and schools, to effectively reach women, young people, families and communities with key messages on fistula prevention, treatment and social reintegration;

(p) Mobilize communities, including local religious and community leaders, women and girls, men and boys, ensuring that youth voices are heard, to advocate for and support universal access to health care, ensuring human rights and reducing stigma and discrimination;

(q) Ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, recognizing that the well-being of women and girls has a significant positive effect on the survival and health of children, families and societies;

(r) Empower fistula survivors to sensitize and mobilize communities as advocates for fistula elimination and safe motherhood;

(s) Strengthen and expand interventions to ensure universal access to education, especially post-primary and higher education, end violence against women and girls and protect and promote their human rights and adopt and enforce laws prohibiting child marriage, which must be supported by innovative incentives for families to keep girls in school, including in rural and remote communities;

(t) Develop linkages and engage with civil society and women's groups to help eliminate fistula;

Research and data collection to advance the elimination of fistula

(u) Strengthen research, data collection, monitoring and evaluation, including up-to-date emergency obstetric and neonatal care needs assessments, to guide the planning and implementation of maternal and newborn health programmes;

(v) Develop, strengthen and integrate within national health information systems routine reviews of maternal and perinatal deaths and near-miss cases, as part of national maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response systems;

(w) Develop community-based and facility-based mechanisms for the systematic notification of obstetric fistula cases to ministries of health and their recording in a national register and establish fistula as a nationally notifiable condition, triggering immediate reporting, tracking and follow-up, using a human rights-based approach.

66. The challenge of ending obstetric fistula requires vastly intensified efforts, including substantially increased funding for interventions at the community, subnational, national, regional and international levels. Significantly enhanced support must be provided to countries, United Nations organizations, the Campaign to End Fistula and other global initiatives dedicated to improving maternal and newborn health and eliminating fistula.

67. Ending fistula is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. To meet the global targets of the 2030 Agenda and end this assault on human dignity and rights, UNFPA and the Campaign to End Fistula will lead the development of a global road map to accelerate actions, as outlined above, to end fistula within a generation.

United Nations A/73/286

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 August 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 22 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Globalization and interdependence

International migration and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 71/237. The introduction summarizes the deliberations of the Assembly on international migration and development. Section II presents information on recent levels and trends in migration globally and the status of ratification of United Nations legal instruments related to migration and human mobility. It also discusses the relationship between migration and development and the contributions of intergovernmental bodies in addressing this relationship. Section III summarizes recent activities on migration and related topics by members of the Global Migration Group. Section IV reports on progress in developing indicators to monitor the migration-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. Section VI discusses six key elements to consider as part of a global programme to improve the collection and use of migration data. Lastly, the report concludes with some actionable recommendations.

On 10 and 11 December 2018, the General Assembly will convene the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakesh, Morocco. Taking place more than 20 years after the Assembly first considered the possibility of holding a United Nations conference on international migration, the Conference will mark a turning point in international cooperation on human mobility.

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I. Introduction

1. Following the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, the General Assembly called repeatedly on the Secretary-General to ascertain the interest of Member States in convening a United Nations conference on international migration and development.[1] Given the diversity of views among Member States, in 2004 the Assembly decided to convene a high-level dialogue on international migration and development (Assembly resolution 58/208, para. 9). The first high-level dialogue, held in 2006, gave rise to the Global Forum on Migration and Development, an informal, voluntary and State-led platform for dialogue and cooperation, and to the Global Migration Group, an informal inter-agency mechanism to promote coherence in work on migration by entities of the United Nations system and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

2. In the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which was adopted at the second high-level dialogue, held in 2013, the important contribution of migration in realizing the Millennium Development Goals was acknowledged (Assembly resolution 68/4, para. 8). In its recognition that human mobility is a key factor for sustainable development (ibid.), the Declaration paved the way for the inclusion of international migration and related topics in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Assembly resolution 70/1) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (Assembly resolution 69/313, annex).

3. In response to a sharp increase in levels of migration and displacement, the Assembly convened a high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants on 19 September 2016. In the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (Assembly resolution 71/1) adopted at the meeting, Member States committed to developing, by 2018, two global compacts, one for safe, orderly and regular migration and one on refugees.[2] Once adopted, these compacts will herald a new era of international cooperation on migration and refugee issues.

4. The Assembly had decided to convene the third high-level dialogue by no later than 2019 (Assembly resolution 69/229, para. 32) and to hold future high-level dialogues on a quadrennial basis beginning with the seventy-third session (Assembly resolution 71/237, para. 34). As part of the follow-up and review of the migration compact, Member States would decide to repurpose and rename future high-level dialogues as the International Migration Review Forum, to be held every four years beginning in 2022.

5. In May 2018, the Secretary-General announced the establishment of the United Nations Network on Migration as a successor to the Global Migration Group. The main purpose of the Network is to ensure effective and coherent system-wide support for implementation of the migration compact once adopted. The Network will be coordinated by IOM, which in 2016 became part of the United Nations system. The new Network will have both a core and an extended membership, with a limited number of working groups on key topics.

II. International migration: a global overview

6. Sections A and B below summarize trends in global migration and the demographic impacts of migration. Sections C and D discuss the status of ratification

[1] See Assembly resolutions 49/127, 50/123, 52/189, 54/212, and 56/203.

[2] In this report, the proposed Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is referred to as the "global migration compact" or "migration compact", while the proposed Global Compact on Refugees is referred to as the "global refugee compact" or "refugee compact".

of relevant United Nations legal instruments and linkages between migration and sustainable development.

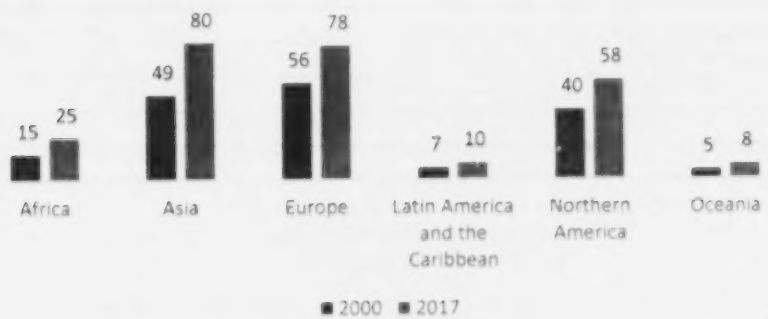
A. Global migration: levels and trends

7. Historically, a multitude of factors have motivated people to migrate. The same is true in the twenty-first century, when many different forces are contributing to population movements, including jobs and prosperity, violence and insecurity, human rights violations, population growth or decline, shifts in the population age distribution, inequality and structural changes in labour markets.

8. Between 2000 and 2017, the estimated number of international migrants increased by almost 50 per cent, reaching 258 million in 2017 (figure 1). Together, Asia and Europe host 6 of every 10 international migrants, corresponding to 31 and 30 per cent, respectively, of persons who reside outside their country of birth, followed by Northern America at 22 per cent. Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania host approximately 10, 4 and 2 per cent of the world's migrants, respectively.

9. Although migration is a global phenomenon, international migrants tend to settle in relatively few countries. In 2017, the 10 destination countries with the largest immigrant populations hosted 51 per cent of the world's international migrants.

Figure 1
Number of international migrants by region of destination, 2000 and 2017 (millions)



Source: United Nations (Population Division), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 revision* (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017).

10. Migration is also concentrated by country of origin, although to a lesser extent than by country of destination. In 2017, the 10 countries of origin with the largest diaspora populations accounted for 36 per cent of the world's migrants.

11. The share of migrants in the total population varies significantly by country. In 2017, international migrants accounted for nearly 12 per cent of the population in the more developed regions — up from less than 9 per cent in 2000 — compared to less than 2 per cent in the developing regions.

12. Most migrants settle in another country within their region of birth. In 2017, for example, 67 per cent of migrants born in Europe were residing in another country of that region, compared to 60 per cent for Asia or Oceania, 28 per cent for Northern America and 16 per cent for Latin America and the Caribbean.

13. Older migrants outnumber younger migrants in the more developed regions, whereas younger migrants outnumber older migrants in the developing regions, reflecting the overall demographic characteristics of those regions. In the developing regions, 21 per cent of international migrants are under the age of 20, more than double the share of migrants aged 60 or over (10 per cent). By contrast, in the developed regions, 21 per cent of the migrant population are aged 60 or over, more than double the share of migrants under the age of 20 (9 per cent).

14. In 2017, female migrants outnumbered male migrants in Europe (52 per cent), Northern America (51.5 per cent), Oceania (51 per cent) and Latin America and the Caribbean (50.4 per cent), while they were outnumbered by male migrants in Africa (47.1 per cent) and Asia (42.4 per cent). Between 2000 and 2017, the percentage of female migrants increased in all regions except Asia, while globally it fell slightly over this period, from 49.3 to 48.4 per cent. The increasing percentage of female migrants in most regions may be due, in part, to the ageing of the population combined with greater female life expectancy, while the declining percentage in Asia reflects a sharp rise in the demand for migrant workers in construction and related sectors in Western Asia.

15. Between 2000 and 2017, the number of refugees and asylum seekers worldwide increased from 16 to 26 million, more than half of whom were under the age of 18 in 2017. Also in 2017, more than 80 per cent of refugees and asylum-seekers resided in countries of the developing regions, while just 10 countries hosted 62 per cent of all refugees and asylum-seekers worldwide.

B. Demographic impacts of migration

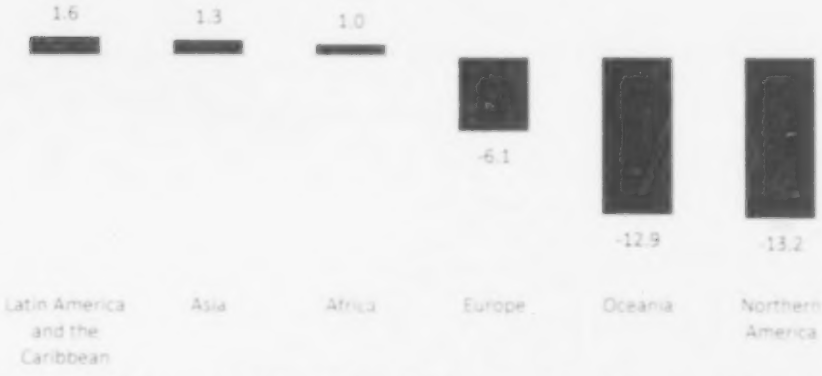
16. The role of migration as a driver of population change is expected to increase in the next few decades as global fertility continues to decline. Since the 1990s, migration has overtaken natural increase (excess of births over deaths) as the main driver of population growth in the more developed regions, where it is expected that the number of deaths will exceed the number of births starting in the 2020s, making migration the sole driver of population growth in the coming decades. By 2050, however, assuming a continuation of current migration flows in terms of direction and magnitude, the population of the more developed regions is expected to decline in size, as the net inflow of migrants is projected to become insufficient to compensate for the excess of deaths over births during the 2040s.

17. The impact of migration on population size varies greatly across geographic regions of the world. If all international migration were to halt immediately and remain at zero in the coming decades, the population of the more developed regions would be 9 per cent smaller by 2050 than if current levels and patterns of migration continued, whereas the population of the developing regions would be about 1 per cent larger. Without future migration, the populations of Northern America and Oceania would be 13 per cent smaller than expected by 2050, while in Europe this difference would be about 6 per cent; by comparison, the populations of Africa and Asia would be 1 per cent larger by 2050, while the population of Latin America and the Caribbean would be 2 per cent larger (figure 2).

18. Without future migration, the median age of the population of Northern America would be 2 years higher than expected by 2050, while the equivalent difference in Oceania and Europe would be 1.6 and 1.1 years, respectively. Similarly, old-age dependency ratios would rise more rapidly in these regions in the absence of future

migration.[3] As with the impact on growth, the hypothetical elimination of future migration would have a comparatively negligible impact on the median age or old-age dependency ratio in the developing regions as a whole. Without future migration, the working-age population would be smaller than expected in 2050 in Northern America (-16 per cent), Oceania (-15 per cent) and Europe (-8 per cent) and slightly larger than expected in Latin America and the Caribbean (+2 per cent) and in Africa and Asia (+1 per cent).

Figure 2
Difference in projected population size without future migration, 2050 (percentages)



Source: United Nations (Population Division), "Migration and population change: drivers and impacts", Population Facts, No. 2017/8 (December 2017).

C. Ratification of migration-related United Nations legal instruments

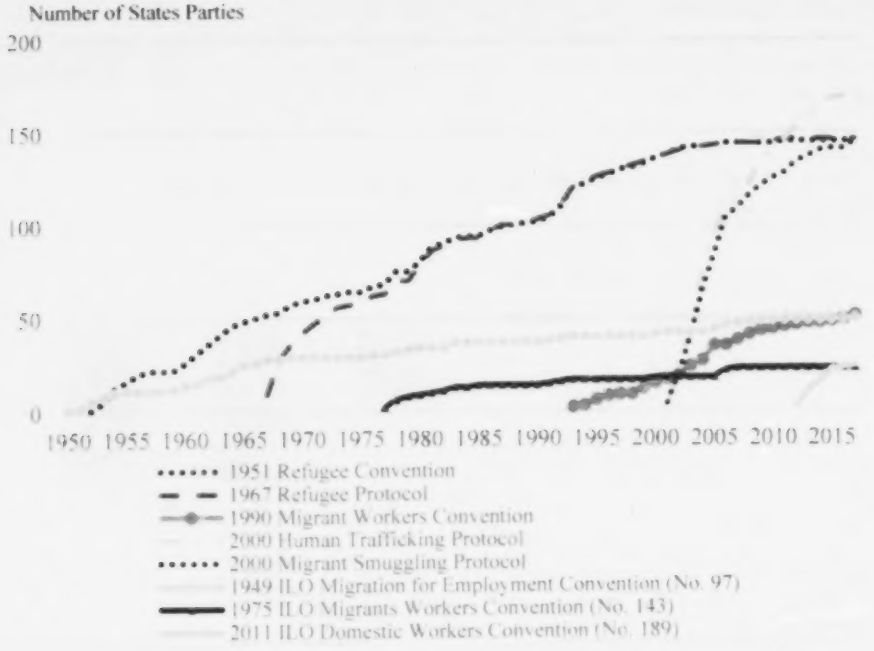
19. Over the past few decades, Member States have ratified a series of multilateral treaties relevant to migration, including labour migration, refugee movements, statelessness, migrant smuggling and human trafficking. These instruments provide helpful guidance for the formulation and implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies, as called for in target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. The extent of ratification varies greatly by type of instrument and by region. As of May 2018, instruments designed to protect refugees and combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking had been ratified by more than three quarters of Member States, whereas the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and instruments to address statelessness had been ratified by fewer than half of all Member States (figure 3).

21. As of May 2018, only 51 Member States had ratified the 1990 Migrant Workers Convention. Collectively, these countries hosted about 23.5 million international migrants in 2017 or about 9 per cent of the global total. None of the States Parties to this Convention are major migrant-receiving countries: only 5 of them hosted more than 1 million international migrants in 2017.

[3] The old-age dependency ratio is equal to the number of people over 65 divided by the population aged 20 to 64.

Figure 3
Status of ratification of multilateral treaties related to migration, 1950–2018


Number of States Parties
200
150
100
50
0
1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015
1951 Refugee Convention
1967 Refugee Protocol
1990 Migrant Workers Convention
2000 Human Trafficking Protocol
2000 Migrant Smuggling Protocol
1949 ILO Migration for Employment Convention (No. 97)
1975 ILO Migrants Workers Convention (No. 143)
2011 ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189)

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection website, https://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?clang=_en.

22. The 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children is the most widely ratified United Nations legal instrument related to migration, with 172 ratifications, while 145 States have ratified the 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The rapid and widespread ratification of these two protocols reflects the concern among Member States about the challenges associated with irregular migration, including the abuse and exploitation of migrants and the role of transnational criminal networks.

23. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol have been ratified by 145 and 146 Member States, respectively. While almost all countries in Europe (95 per cent) and most countries in Africa (89 per cent) and Latin America and the Caribbean (82 per cent) have ratified the Convention and Protocol, the regions of Oceania and Asia lag behind (57 and 40 per cent, respectively).

24. The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons has been ratified by 90 countries, while 71 Member States have acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In Europe, more than two thirds of all countries have ratified both Conventions; by contrast, only 17 and 8 per cent of Asian countries have ratified the 1954 and 1961 Conventions, respectively.

D. International migration and sustainable development

25. Migration and mobility are linked closely to development processes, including the demographic transition. As national income per capita rises and countries become integrated into global systems of disease control and public health, population size tends to increase thanks to declining mortality rates. Population growth, combined with dislocations in the rural labour force linked to the modernization of agriculture,

spurs widespread urbanization and emigration. With continuing development, fertility levels decline, population growth slows down and eventually stabilizes, the pace of urbanization diminishes and emigration tends to become less common than immigration.[4] Thus, the propensity for emigration tends to rise and then fall as countries become more developed,[5] reflecting the impact of development on migration patterns and trends.

26. There is substantial evidence, as well, to demonstrate the impact of migration on development. In 2017, officially recorded remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached $466 billion. Remittances have helped to lift millions of people out of poverty, contributing to improvements in food security, education, health, well-being and housing for families and communities in countries of origin. However, the contribution of migration to sustainable development goes far beyond personal financial transfers and includes the transfer of skills and knowledge through formal and informal education and the promotion of trade and investment, often involving well-organized and cohesive diaspora populations. Moreover, in countries of destination, migrants often fill gaps in the labour market and compensate for shortages in the work force caused by demographic shifts or other factors. Migrants often perform jobs shunned by local workers, thus complementing the local labour force. As entrepreneurs, migrants often create jobs and contribute to the fiscal base. Yet, migration can also bring challenges. In small developing countries, for example, emigration may contribute to shortages of skilled workers, including health workers. In destination countries, large inflows of migrants can displace local workers and create other challenges, especially in the short term.

27. Since 1995, the Second Committee has considered the sub-item "International migration and development", generally on a biennial basis, on the basis of a report of the Secretary-General. Given its recent request for the Secretary-General to report on implementation of the migration compact on a biennial basis, the Assembly may wish to consider whether or how to align these two agenda items.

28. The Commission on Population and Development has been the principal intergovernmental body advising the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the status of implementation of the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, which includes a section that addresses key aspects of international migration. The special theme of the annual session of the Commission has focused on migration five times since 1995, including in 2006 and 2013 in preparation for the first and the second high-level dialogues.

29. Both the Second Committee and the Commission have highlighted the linkages between migration and development, while also addressing broader issues such as the human rights of migrants and the challenges of irregular migration and return. With the adoption of the migration compact, the General Assembly may wish to consider the role of these bodies and their potential future contributions to the intergovernmental consideration of international migration, including in support of the thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals within the high-level political forum.

[4] W. Zelinsky, "The hypothesis of the mobility transition", *Geographical Review*, vol. 61, No. 2 (April 1971).

[5] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/technicalpapers/docs/TP2017-8.pdf.

III. Activities undertaken by the United Nations system

30. This section provides an overview of activities undertaken by members of the Global Migration Group, either individually or collectively, in the area of migration.

A. New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

31. Over the past two years, entities of the United Nations system have carried out numerous activities to advance the aims of the New York Declaration, including by assisting Member States in the preparation of the global migration compact. Members of the Global Migration Group provided inputs to issue briefs prepared for thematic consultations held by the General Assembly in 2017. They also contributed to regional consultations, prepared briefing notes and organized technical meetings and side-events. The regional commissions convened meetings and prepared written inputs for consultations about the migration compact within their respective regions.[6] Members of the Global Migration Group also provided expert advice to Member States during the intergovernmental negotiations held between February and July 2018.

32. The Global Migration Group published a handbook to support Member States in collecting and analysing migration data, integrating migration into national development plans and strategies and monitoring the migration-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.[7] The guide is expected to serve as a tool for implementing a global programme to strengthen national capacities in data collection, analysis and dissemination, as envisioned in the draft global migration compact.[8]

33. Migrants who fall outside the legal category of "refugee" may sometimes find themselves in vulnerable situations because of the conditions in their country of origin, the circumstances in which they travel, the conditions they face upon arrival in a destination country or personal characteristics such as age, gender, disability or health status. The Global Migration Group published a set of principles and guidelines on the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations.[9]

34. IOM and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) took the lead in developing a Global Migration Group guidance note on integrating migration and displacement in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.[10]

35. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is leading the development of the global refugee compact, founded on the practical application of the comprehensive refugee response framework described in annex I of the New York Declaration, which is now being used in practice by 14 countries. The refugee compact is being developed through a process of consultation with Member States and other stakeholders and will be presented for adoption by the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

B. Assisting migrants, refugees and stateless persons

36. In cooperation with States and partners, UNHCR provided protection and assistance to millions of persons of concern, carried out biometric registration and

[6] https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/regional-consultations.

[7] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/others/docs/handbook_GMG_Dec_2017.pdf.

[8] See also section V.

[9] https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/PrinciplesAndGuidelines.pdf.

[10] http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/GMG_Integrating_Migration_and_Displacement_into_UNDAFs_Guidance_Note_2017.pdf.

worked to include the needs of forcibly displaced persons in development planning. The Office developed a strategy for the central Mediterranean and updated its 10-Point Plan in Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration.[11] As part of its campaign to end statelessness by 2024, UNHCR issued guidance to prevent statelessness in nationality laws,[12] establish statelessness determination procedures[13] and promote registration at birth.[14] UNHCR developed, with the World Bank, a set of principles to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 on legal identity for all, including birth registration. UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) collaborated to ensure the right of children to a nationality and to improve the protection of unaccompanied and separated children in Europe.

37. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) assists Member States in the formulation of anti-trafficking and anti-smuggling policies and promotes cooperation to prevent trafficking and smuggling, prosecute traffickers and smugglers and protect victims of trafficking. In the past two years, UNODC has provided specialized training to government officials and criminal justice practitioners in more than 70 countries. The Office conducted needs assessments in 13 countries, complemented by more than 100 technical assistance activities.[15]

38. The International Labour Organization (ILO) prioritized its "decent work" agenda and its fundamental principles and rights at work within the context of the global migration compact, including by forging partnerships with IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The ILO and UNHCR agreed on joint activities in the context of the refugee compact.

39. IOM trains law enforcement officers, immigration personnel and community members on the identification, referral, rights and needs of victims of trafficking and forced labour and of other migrants in vulnerable situations. It has rolled out programmes to reduce violence affecting local communities in over 40 countries, working to prevent displacement and encouraging a sustainable approach to return migration. IOM seeks to counter violent extremism and radicalization of young people by creating opportunities for at-risk youth. IOM assists Governments in post-conflict situations by strengthening transitional justice mechanisms and providing victims with appropriate remedy, reparations or compensation.

40. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) has promoted a gender-responsive approach in the global migration compact by sponsoring a working group on the human rights of women migrants. UN-Women has implemented programmes to promote the rights of women migrant workers in Mexico, the Philippines and the Republic of Moldova, striving to protect women against exclusion and exploitation at all stages of the migration process. In Asia and the Pacific, UN-Women, in partnership with the ILO, IOM and UNODC, has worked to promote safe migration, prevent human trafficking, protect the human rights of women migrant workers and end violence against them.

41. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided reproductive healthcare services in humanitarian settings as well as services catering to the medical, psycho-social and legal needs of survivors of gender-based violence. The Fund worked closely with national authorities, partners and communities to ensure that minimum standards are in place to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in humanitarian settings.

[11] http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/the-10-point-plan-in-action.html.
[12] http://www.refworld.org/docid/58cfab014.html.
[13] http://www.refworld.org/docid/57836cff4.html.
[14] http://www.refworld.org/docid/5a0ac8f94.html.
[15] https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/publications.html?ref=menuside.

42. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has worked with UNHCR and other partners to assist Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh and to mitigate the environmental impacts of displacement.

43. FAO has expanded livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon and has rehabilitated agricultural infrastructure, restored rural livelihoods and enhanced food security for returnees and host communities in Iraq. In Turkey, UNDP has assisted community centres and organized vocational training for Syrian refugees. The ILO, UNDP and the World Food Programme have analysed economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities in the region.[16] The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has worked with national authorities to address the environmental consequences of the Syrian refugee crisis by integrating environmental protection into national response plans. UNHCR and the World Bank have worked to expand access to concessional loans from multilateral development banks for middle-income countries hosting large refugee populations. In Iraq, UNDP implemented rehabilitation and construction projects and promoted access to basic services for thousands of refugees and displaced persons and for host communities. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization has created employment opportunities for local communities hosting refugees and internally displaced persons in Iraq and Jordan.

44. In Zambia, UNDP, UNHCR and other partners have promoted the economic, social and legal integration of Angolan and Rwandan refugees while working to strengthen the resilience of host communities.

45. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has assisted displaced and migrant children in more than 80 countries, providing services in such areas as child protection, health and education, nutrition and social protection. A report by UNICEF and IOM analysed the vulnerabilities of children, especially unaccompanied minors, on their way to Europe.[17]

46. A working paper by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization found that, despite the existence of strong legal frameworks, refugees encounter many obstacles that prevent them from having access to education.[18]

47. In 2016, the ILO adopted a set of principles on ensuring access to local labour markets for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.[19]

48. A recent UNDP report examined the relationship between forced displacement and violent extremism in Guatemala, Lebanon, Nigeria, Turkey and Vanuatu.[20]

49. UNEP developed responses to address environmental impacts arising from displacement in Guatemala, Nigeria, Turkey, Vanuatu and Yemen as well as to mitigate environmental consequences of recent movements of Venezuelan migrants into Brazil and Colombia.

50. The Department of Public Information promoted the "Together" campaign — launched in 2016 to combat xenophobia and discrimination — through its information centres and social media platforms. In January 2018, DPI brought together hundreds of university students, highlighting opportunities to promote respect, safety and

[16] http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/Exec-Summary-Jobs%20Make%20the%20Difference.pdf.

[17] https://data.unicef.org/resources/harrowing-journeys/.

[18] http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002510/251076E.pdf.

[19] http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/projects/WCMS_536440/lang--en/index.htm.

[20] http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf.

dignity for refugees. A charter, produced at the event, called on institutions of higher education to participate in the #JoinTogether initiative.

C. Migration, poverty reduction and sustainable development

51. UNDP, with the support of the ILO, IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and UN-Women, completed the Joint Migration and Development Initiative in December 2017. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities, the Initiative, carried out in eight countries, sought to empower migrants as development actors at the local and regional level.

52. Since 2011, IOM and UNDP have sponsored a global programme to support the mainstreaming of migration in national development and sectoral policy planning in Bangladesh, Ecuador, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Morocco, Serbia and Tunisia.

53. IOM has provided services to migrants and their families in host and home countries, including programmes for pre-departure orientation for prospective migrants, for transfer and productive use of migrant remittances and for development of entrepreneurial skills among migrants. The ILO piloted a project to improve access to social protection for migrant workers in Costa Rica and Mexico.

54. IOM has assisted Governments in preparing for, and responding to, migratory movements linked to environmental hazards. The ILO, IOM and UNHCR supported multilateral efforts to address climate-related human mobility and displacement in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

55. Since 2006, the Financing Facility for Remittances of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has funded over 60 projects in more than 45 countries, promoting innovative business models for diaspora investment, remittance transfers, financial inclusion and entrepreneurship for migrants and members of their families.

56. In collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the World Bank, IFAD organized a global forum on remittances, investment and development at the United Nations in New York in June 2017. At the forum, participants presented innovative approaches for promoting safer, cheaper and faster transfer of remittances and for the productive use of remittances, as well as ways and means of encouraging diaspora investments.[21] The first State-led forum on remittances, investment and development was held in Kuala Lumpur in May 2018.[22]

57. In its resolution 72/281 of 11 June 2018, the General Assembly proclaimed 16 June as the International Day for Family Remittances.

58. FAO has promoted rural employment in communities of origin of young migrants in various African countries. In 2017, World Food Day was dedicated to highlighting the relationship between migration, food security, nutrition and rural development.

59. UNDP and UNEP provided loans to female family members of migrant workers in Tajikistan. The loans helped migrant families to develop new livelihoods, create small businesses and reduce their dependence on remittances.

[21] www.remittancesgateway.org/gfrid-2017.

[22] www.gfrid2018.org.

D. Data, training and knowledge management

60. The Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, released new estimates of the number of international migrants by age, sex, country of origin and country of residence;[23] the *International Migration Report 2017* analysed recent levels and trends of global migration. The Division hosted a coordination meeting on international migration, the largest multi-stakeholder event on migration held annually at the United Nations in New York.[24] The Division launched a compendium of agreed language on migration, a searchable database with texts of conventions, declarations and resolutions related to migration and adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.[25]

61. Together with IOM and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Statistics Division and Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs prepared a note on strengthening migration data in the context of the migration compact[26] and organized the first International Forum on Migration Statistics, held in Paris, in January 2018.[27] The two Divisions also worked with the International Union for the Scientific Population to developing a statement on improving migration data, research and training as an input to the negotiations on the migration compact.[28]

62. The Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Population Division and IOM, convened an expert group meeting on migration statistics. The recommendations of the meeting will be used to guide the preparation of a handbook on sustainable development indicators relevant for migration.[29] In collaboration with the Population Division, IOM, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNODC, the Statistics Division launched a new programme to strengthen the collection and use of migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New York Declaration.[30]

63. The Statistics Division worked closely with the Bureau of the Statistical Commission to provide technical inputs to the intergovernmental negotiations on the global migration compact.

64. UNFPA advocated for the inclusion of migration questions in population censuses. It also provided technical support for calculating Sustainable Development Goals indicators and generating data disaggregated by migratory status using information from censuses.

65. As part of a joint labour migration programme for Africa, the African Union and the ILO launched the first edition of a report on labour migration statistics in Africa.[31] The ILO maintains the International Labour Migration Statistics Database of the

[23] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.shtml.
[24] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/index.shtml.
[25] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/resolutions/docsearch.shtml.
[26] https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/stocktaking_un_iom_oecd.pdf.
[27] http://www.oecd.org/migration/forum-migration-statistics/.
[28] https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/iussp_statement_global_compact_on_migration.pdf
[29] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/new-york--egm-migration-data.
[30] https://www.un.org/development/desa/da/project-view-public/.
[31] http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/information-resources/publications/WCMS_575651/lang--en/index.htm.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which includes statistical data on migrant workers in Southeast Asia.[32]

66. United Nations University (UNU) issued a report on representations of migration in the media, exploring how the media shapes and disseminates perceptions of migration. UNU organized a series of panels on academic perspectives on migration to support the preparation of the migration compact. A UNU programme at the University of Maastricht, the Netherlands, offers a diploma in the governance of migration, a course designed for practitioners from developing countries.

67. UN-Women's training centre in the Dominican Republic offered courses on migration and development from a gender and rights-based perspective.

68. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development examined the role of well-managed migration in addressing Africa's development challenges.[33] The report found that intra-African migration acted as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth and structural transformation.

69. In 2017, ESCAP, together with IOM, prepared a report on the challenges and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration in the Asia-Pacific region.[34]

70. IOM collects a vast amount of operational data on displacement and "missing migrants".[35] IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre in Berlin analyses and disseminates migration data and works with partners to establish and manage data-driven initiatives. The Centre responds to requests for capacity-building on migration data and contributes to the analysis and monitoring of migration trends and migration-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.[36] In coordination with several United Nations agencies, IOM has developed a Global Migration Data Portal,[37] providing access to a broad range of data on international migration.

71. IFAD launched RemitSCOPE, a web-based portal providing information on remittance transfers, remittance markets and regulatory frameworks. Bringing together information on the financial needs of families receiving remittances and financial strategies of the private sector, the portal is expected to serve as a resource for entrepreneurs in financial technology, remittance service providers and financial regulators.[38]

72. UNHCR, together with the statistical offices of the European Union, Norway and Turkey, worked to develop guidelines on compiling statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons. In April 2018, UNHCR and the World Bank signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a joint data centre on forced displacement.[39]

73. In June 2018, UNODC launched its first global assessment on the smuggling of migrants, comparing information from 30 major migrant smuggling routes.[40] The study analyses commonalities and differences between these smuggling routes in terms of the profile of those being smuggled, the nature of the crime being perpetrated

[32] http://www.ilo.org/asia/WCMS_416366/lang--en/index.htm.
[33] http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/aldcafrica2018_en.pdf.
[34] www.unescap.org/publications/towards-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-asia-pacific-region.
[35] http://missingmigrants.iom.int/downloads.
[36] https://gmdac.iom.int/.
[37] https://migrationdataportal.org.
[38] www.remitscope.org.
[39] http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/04/20/world-bank-group-unhcr-sign-memorandum-to-establish-joint-data-center-on-forced-displacement.
[40] http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/glosom.html.

and the human costs involved. It also provides estimates of the magnitude of migrant smuggling and of revenues generated by these criminal activities.

IV. Status of Sustainable Development Goals indicators related to migration

74. In its resolution 71/313, the General Assembly adopted a global indicator framework to monitor the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Members of the Global Migration Group have developed and refined methodologies, tested indicators and strengthened collaborations with national statistical systems. This section summarizes progress made in measuring 10 migration-related indicators based on the reports of the custodian agencies.[41] Potentially, this indicator framework could also play a role in monitoring the status of implementation of the global migration compact.

75. Significant work needs to be done before the 10 migration-related indicators listed below can be used for monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. As of May 2018, the IAEG-SDGs had considered only 3 of the 10 indicators as conceptually clear, with an established methodology and regular production of appropriate data (see table below).

76. Countries with the greatest burden of disease generally have the smallest number of skilled health professionals per capita. The World Health Organization (WHO) developed a methodology to measure the density and distribution of health workers (indicator 3.c.1) and worked with the ILO and OECD on data collection. Over the past 10 years, the number of foreign-born doctors and nurses in OECD countries increased by 60 per cent, a trend that is likely to continue due to the rising demand for health-care workers. The WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel provides a voluntary framework to develop policies related to the mobility of health professionals.[42]

Table
Overview of global Sustainable Development Goals indicators related to migration

Indicator	*Tier classification*	*Custodian agency*	*Description*
3.c.1	I	WHO	Health worker density and distribution
4.b.1	I	OECD	Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study
8.8.1	I	ILO	Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status
8.8.2	I	ILO	Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status

[41] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_11%20May%202018_web.pdf.

[42] http://www.who.int/hrh/migration/code/WHO_global_code_of_practice_EN.pdf.

Indicator	*Tier classification*	*Custodian agency*	*Description*
10.7.1	III	ILO, World Bank	Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of yearly income earned in country of destination
10.7.2	III	United Nations (Population Division), IOM	Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies
10.c.1	II	World Bank	Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted
16.2.2	I	UNODC	Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation
17.3.2	I	World Bank	Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP
17.18.1	III	United Nations (Statistics Division)	Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

Source: Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG) Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators of 11 May 2018, available at: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/.

77. The volume of development assistance for scholarships abroad (indicator 4.b.1) declined from US$ 12 billion in 2010 to US$ 11.5 billion in 2015. Given that countries such as China, Brazil and India and the private sector do not report data to OECD Development Assistance Committee, the coverage of the data on scholarships is only partial. In Sweden, about 50 per cent of all scholarship recipients from Eastern Europe over the past 20 years returned to their country of origin, 27 per cent remained in Sweden and 23 per cent moved to a third country.[43]

78. Migrant workers are subject to twice the number of injuries of local workers, while this number is even higher for irregular migrants employed in the informal sector. Moreover, migrant workers are often denied joining trade unions or other labour rights. The ILO continued its work to develop methodologies for indicators on occupational injuries (indicator 8.8.1) and labour rights (indicator 8.8.2), in close collaboration with IOM and WHO. ILO occupational safety and health standards provide the basis for protecting the safety and health of both migrant and non-migrant workers.

79. Reducing recruitment costs and associated fees could lead to considerable savings for labour migrants. The ILO and the World Bank continued to develop a methodology to assist member States in measuring recruitment costs for migrant workers and related fees (indicator 10.7.1).

[43] http://www.delmi.se/en#!/en/news/new-delmi-policy-brief.

80. The Population Division and IOM worked to develop a methodology for monitoring the number of countries with well-managed migration policies (indicator 10.7.2). It is envisaged that the Division's *United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development*, carried out periodically at the request of the General Assembly, will include questions on migration governance, guided by the IOM migration governance framework. Involvement of IOM country offices is expected to improve feedback by Member States. IOM, in collaboration with the Economist Intelligence Unit, assists over 40 countries in assessing the status of migration governance based on some 90 indicators.

81. According to the World Bank, the global costs of transferring remittances averaged 7.2 per cent in 2017 (indicator 10.c.1). The costs of transferring remittances have fallen only slightly in recent years, while prices remain particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa.[44] Increased competition and the elimination of exclusivity contracts are critical to lower remittance costs to less than three per cent, as envisioned in target 10.c. A steady inflow of remittances can be leveraged to access international capital markets since they reduce the risk ratings of countries in debt sustainability analyses. The potential economic impact of remittances is being monitored by tracking their volume as a percentage of gross domestic product (indicator 17.3.2).

82. UNODC has tested a statistical method to infer the total number of trafficked persons based on multiple incomplete reports of known cases (indicator 16.2.2). The methodology also produces information on the demographic characteristics of victims of human trafficking, on the relative importance of domestic and international trafficking and on the prevalence of trafficking in specific employment sectors.

83. In monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, the use of disaggregated data is critical to fulfilling the commitment in the 2030 Agenda to ensure that no one will be left behind. An expert group meeting on improving migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda, organized by the Statistics Division, identified an initial set of 24 indicators to be prioritized for disaggregation by migratory status (indicator 17.18.1).[45] The meeting agreed that, as a first step, countries may wish to distinguish migrants from non-migrants based on country of birth (foreign-born and native-born population) or citizenship (citizens and foreign citizens). Subsequently, disaggregation by migratory status could also include duration of stay, reasons for migration and the country of birth or citizenship of parents.

84. A recent study illustrated the usefulness of microdata samples from population censuses to disaggregate selected indicators for foreign-born and native-born populations in 75 countries.[46]

V. Towards a global programme on migration data

85. The General Assembly has repeatedly called for reliable, accurate and disaggregated statistical data and indicators that are nationally relevant and internationally comparable to support evidence-based policy-making and decision-making in all aspects of sustainable development. The New York Declaration stressed the importance of international cooperation for improving migration data through capacity-building, financial support and technical assistance.[47]

[44] https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/en.

[45] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/new-york--egm-migration-data.

[46] https://publications.iom.int/books/pilot-study-disaggregating-sdg-indicators-migratory-status.

[47] https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/stocktaking_un_iom_oecd.pdf.

86. Improving the evidence base on migration was a key theme of the thematic, regional and civil society consultations carried out in preparation for negotiations on the migration compact. Several participants in these consultations expressed the view that developing and implementing well-managed migration policies, ensuring that migrants are not left behind and countering xenophobia and intolerance require having access to reliable information.[48]

87. Many countries in the world are unable to track the inflows and outflows of international migrants and lack a solid baseline to measure progress in achieving the migration-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

88. A global programme for strengthening national capacities to gather and utilize migration-related data, as proposed in the draft global migration compact, will require a sustained effort and significant investment. Under the guidance of the Statistical Commission, Member States will work to elaborate and implement a comprehensive strategy for improving migration data. It is expected that a proposed framework will be discussed during the next session of the Statistical Commission in March 2019. This section reviews six key elements that could be part of such a strategy, focusing on the next 5 to 10 years.

A. Leveraging the 2020 round of population censuses

89. A census is the most valuable tool for establishing a baseline regarding the size and composition of a population. Many countries include migration questions in their censuses, focusing on country of birth or citizenship or on place of residence five years earlier. Some also probe for information on duration of residence, reasons for migration and country of birth or citizenship of parents. However, censuses often fail to collect adequate information on refugees and on migrants in an irregular situation. Once collected, migration data are often underexploited owing to delays in dissemination or a lack of data disaggregated by migratory status in tabulations provided by national statistical offices.

90. The global programme could provide dedicated financial support to countries to ensure that (a) recommended core questions on migration are included in the census, (b) enumerators are properly trained to identify migrants, (c) information campaigns encourage all migrants to participate, regardless of their legal status, without fear of reprisals, (d) migration data are properly collected, disaggregated and disseminated in a timely manner and (e) migration data are exchanged and shared between countries, with due regard for issues of privacy. Support provided to national statistical authorities could include defraying the costs of additional census questions, seconding experts in migration statistics or information technology to assist census teams, training enumerators and providing clear guidance about migration questions in census materials. Such support should be guided by the 2017 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 3*.[49]

B. Using migration data from administrative sources

91. All countries maintain registers to administer the adjudication of migration-related processes for foreign citizens, such as entry, exit, stay, employment, asylum and citizenship. Labour-exporting countries collect similar information on citizens working abroad. Although these registers collect information on inflows and outflows

[48] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/16/documents/presentations/4a%20-%20Kraly_Outcomes%20from%20thematic%20sessions.pdf.

[49] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesM/Series_M67Rev3en.pdf.

of migrants, the reasons for migration as well as key migrant characteristics, such as sex, age, country of previous or next residence, length of stay, legal status and family characteristics, are generally not systematically compiled and disseminated.

92. In addition to developing guidelines for the collection, compilation and dissemination of migration-related data from administrative sources, building on the 1998 *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1*,[50] the global programme could boost the collection and utilization of data from administrative sources. This initiative should be informed by good practices, such as the collection of data on asylum applications and decisions by UNHCR, the collection of data on inflows and outflows of international migrants by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the collection of data on international migration in the Americas by the Organization of American States. Such data should exclusively be used for statistical purposes in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (General Assembly resolution 68/261).

C. Gathering data on migration through sample surveys

93. Historically, the international community has established survey programmes to address key policy concerns. In the early 1970s, the World Fertility Surveys were launched in response to concerns about rapid population growth. Subsequently, the Demographic and Health Surveys have provided critical data to address a range of health needs. Where relevant, countries may wish to carry out nationally representative migration surveys every 10 years, possibly about halfway between two consecutive censuses.

94. An international migration survey programme could assist national statistical offices by developing questionnaires and manuals, preparing software and seconding migration experts. The survey programme, to be carried out by a consortium of research institutes, would build on good practices, such as the international migration household surveys in the Mediterranean region,[51] the Mexican Migration Project[52] and the project on migration between Africa and Europe.[53]

95. Countries may wish to take advantage of existing household survey programmes, such as the Labour Force Surveys,[54] the Living Standards Measurement Studies,[55] the Demographic and Health Surveys[56] and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys,[57] by adding relevant questions or modules on migration. At a minimum, household surveys should distinguish between migrants and non-migrants. While adding migration questions to existing surveys may be cost-effective, it may also create challenges for sample design since migrants tend to be distributed unevenly within the population.

[50] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesM/SeriesM_58rev1e.pdf.
[51] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-neighbourhood-policy/enp-south/med-hims.
[52] http://mmp.opr.princeton.edu/.
[53] https://mafeproject.site.ined.fr/.
[54] http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.home.
[55] http://surveys.worldbank.org/lsms.
[56] https://dhsprogram.com/.
[57] http://mics.unicef.org/.

D. Supporting demand-driven training programmes

96. Recent workshops, carried out by the Population and Statistics Divisions in Addis Ababa,[58] Bangkok,[59] Dakar,[60] and Rome[61] have highlighted the demand by Member States for training on methods for estimating migration levels and trends and for monitoring progress toward the migration-related targets of the 2030 Agenda. A global programme could support the further development of demand-driven training programmes on migration data for practitioners working in national statistical offices, interior and labour ministries, immigration agencies, overseas employment agencies, non-governmental organizations and other relevant entities.

97. Such programmes should be guided by the 2030 Agenda, the New York Declaration and the global migration compact. They should provide training on United Nations standards for the collection and tabulation of migration statistics, the measurement and estimation of migration, indicators for measuring migration-related targets and the disaggregation of the Sustainable Development Goals by migratory status, as well as data exchange, collaboration and partnerships. The programmes should build on existing tools, such as the Global Migration Group handbook for improving the production and use of migration data for development[62] and the Statistics Division handbook on measuring international migration through population censuses.[63]

98. Training programmes must be complemented with in-country support and follow-up provided by qualified nationals, supported by international experts. Courses via eLearning could also be employed as a training method.

E. Establishing regional training centres

99. Regional training centres are critical for ensuring that training and research services are delivered as close as possible to the point of use. The call for regional migration observatories in the migration compact is consistent with recent proposals and initiatives, including for an African institute for remittances, an African migration observatory and a continuous reporting system on international migration in the Americas. Decades-long experience in supporting graduate institutes for demographic training and research, such as the Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques[64] and the Regional Institute for Population Studies[65] suggest that these centres should be embedded within existing universities. The Global Network of Institutes for Statistical Training, recently established by the Statistical Commission, could provide a useful platform for collaboration among training centres. The regional training centres would also provide an invaluable opportunity for countries in the same region to share and exchange data on migration to work toward improving the availability and quality of such data.

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[58] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2014/index.shtml.

[59] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/bangkok--international-migration-data/.

[60] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2015/index.shtml.

[61] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2016/index.shtml.

[62] www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/15/documents/Final%20Handbook%2030.06.16_AS4.pdf.

[63] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/48th-session/documents/BG-4a-Migration-Handbook-E.pdf.

[64] http://www.iford-cm.org/.

[65] http://www.rips-ug.edu.gh/.

F. Promoting cooperation and partnerships

100. The global programme could facilitate bilateral, regional and South-South cooperation on migration between statistical offices and research institutions. The programme could be supported by the capacity-building mechanism outlined in paragraph 43 of the draft migration compact and executed by a consortium of international organizations with relevant expertise. Partners could include the private sector, the research community and civil society.

VI. Recommendations

101. **Member States who have not already done so are invited to sign, ratify or accede to United Nations treaties or conventions related to international migrants, refugees and stateless persons and to lift any remaining reservations, especially regarding economic and social integration. These actions will contribute to the design of well-managed migration policies and promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

102. **For the global programme on data envisaged by the migration compact, Member States may wish to consider the following six areas of work: (a) leveraging the 2020 round of population censuses, (b) using data from administrative records, (c) gathering migration data through sample surveys, (d) supporting demand-driven training programmes, (e) establishing regional training centres on migration and (f) promoting cooperation and partnerships.**

103. **Relevant entities of the United Nations system are encouraged to continue to develop Sustainable Development Goals indicators related to migration, many of which still lack an agreed methodology or regular production of the data required for measuring the indicator in a majority of countries.**

104. **The General Assembly may wish to consider whether or how to align new and existing agenda items related to migration.**

105. **The General Assembly may also wish to review the past role of existing bodies and discuss their potential future contributions to intergovernmental discussions of migration, including in support of the thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals within the high-level political forum.**

United Nations A/73/287

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 26 of the provisional agenda*
Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

Activities during the International Year of Pulses, 2016

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Following the International Year of Pulses in 2016, activities for the promotion of pulses and their benefits have continued to raise awareness around the world and link pulses to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/231. It provides an overview of progress made during the Year on the basis of an evaluation report prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and endorsed by its Conference in 2017. Member States are recommended to continue activities from the Year and to seek to integrate them within the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

* A/73/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 68/231, the General Assembly declared 2016 the International Year of Pulses.

2. In the resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 on international years and anniversaries and Assembly resolutions 53/199 and 61/185 on the proclamation of international years. The Assembly invited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to facilitate the implementation of the Year in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders, and to keep it informed of progress.

3. Also in the resolution, the General Assembly invited all relevant stakeholders to make voluntary contributions and to provide other forms of support to the Year. It stressed that the costs of all activities arising from the implementation of the resolution above and beyond activities within the mandate of FAO should be met through voluntary contributions, including from the private sector. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventy-third session a focused and concise report on activities resulting from the implementation of the resolution, which would elaborate on, inter alia, the evaluation of the Year.

II. Evaluation of progress of the International Year of Pulses, 2016

4. The overarching objective of the International Year of Pulses was to raise awareness on the many benefits of pulses for food and nutrition security by opening opportunities for information exchange, improving mutual understanding through education and communication activities, promoting appropriate policies and developing the skills necessary to enhance the production and trade of pulses.

5. In order to guide implementation, an action plan for the Year was developed in collaboration with the international steering committee of the Year in 2016. The main activities of the action plan included:

(a) Regional and global consultations with pulse experts, policymakers and producer and trade organizations;

(b) Global and regional awareness campaigns through online forums, the Internet and social media;

(c) The creation of a food composition database of pulses;

(d) Research and production of documents and scientific studies, such as "The global economy of pulses" and *Pulses and their by-products as animal feed*.

6. At the fortieth session of the FAO Conference, held in Rome from 3 to 8 July 2017, member States endorsed a report on the evaluation of the International Year of Pulses, 2016,[1] highlighting the processes put in place and the overall outcomes and challenges of the Year.

7. Activities for the Year were launched around the world and served to disseminate knowledge of the benefits of pulses and foster dialogue on the development of policies that promoted their production, consumption and trade.

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), document C 2017/29.

8. The activities undertaken as a result of the Year are contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. Pulses have important health benefits (Goal 3) as they are highly nutritious and densely packed with proteins — double the amount found in wheat and three times that of rice — and unlike animal sources of protein, such as beef or milk, pulses do not contain residues of hormones or antibiotics, although they may contain residues of pesticides, depending on the production method. Pulses are economically accessible, contribute to food security at all levels and foster sustainable agriculture (Goals 2 and 8). Given their versatility, poor farmers can easily grow them, resulting in more stable livelihoods and additional income. Pulse crops contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and promote biodiversity (Goals 13 and 15), since they are more drought tolerant than major staple grains and add significant amounts of nitrogen to the soil.

9. The publication of scientific studies and a multitude of awareness campaigns have been ongoing since 2016 at the global, regional and national levels through Internet resources and social media. The website dedicated to the Year continues to promote the benefits of pulses in seven languages, including through teaching materials, fact sheets, blogs, multimedia applications, videos and audio files.[2]

10. Special ambassadors for the International Year of Pulses continue to raise public awareness in all regions on the importance of pulses and motivate relevant stakeholders to create connections throughout the food chain, to further global production of pulses and to address relevant trade challenges.

11. At the fortieth session of the FAO Conference, member States also focused on the importance of the legacy activities of the Year, including through the adoption by the Conference of its resolution 10/2017 on the potential annual observance of World Pulses Day on 10 February.

III. Conclusions

12. The International Year of Pulses succeeded in raising awareness and promoting action on the benefits of pulses and how they contribute to good health, benefit farmers' livelihoods and impact the environment. Even though dried beans, lentils and peas have been around for centuries, they will play a fundamental role in a sustainable future and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

13. Following the Year, activities to promote the benefits of pulses have continued across the world, guided by a set of five key messages:

- **Pulses are highly nutritious**. Pulses may be small, but they are densely packed with protein, typically containing twice the amount of that found in wholegrain cereals and three times that of rice. When other foods are combined with pulses, the nutritional value of pulses is further enhanced. For example, consuming cereals with pulses has the potential to increase the protein quality of the overall meal.
- **Pulses are economically accessible and contribute to food security at all levels**. Pulses are an inexpensive source of protein, which is a crucial component of any healthy diet, but especially in poorer areas where meat, dairy and fish are economically inaccessible. Pulses can also serve as a source of income, as smallholder farmers who grow pulses can sell them at markets or process them to create added-value products.

[2] See http://www.fao.org/pulses-2016/en/.

- **Pulses have important health benefits**. When combined with food high in vitamin C, pulses' high iron content makes them a potent food for replenishing iron stores, particularly for women at reproductive age, who are more at risk of iron deficiency anaemia. Pulses are also good sources of vitamins, such as folate, which reduces the risk of neural tube defects such as spina bifida in newborn babies. With a low glycaemic index and low fat and high fibre content, pulses are suitable for people with diabetes.

- **Pulses contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation**. Pulses are climate-smart as they simultaneously adapt to climate change and contribute towards mitigating its effects. Introducing them into farming systems can be key to increasing resilience to climate change. There are many drought-resistant pulses, such as pigeon peas, bambara beans and lentils. These pulses can be cultivated in arid climates that have limited and often erratic rainfall of 300–450 mm/year.

- **Pulses promote biodiversity**. Pulses are able to increase biodiversity as they can fix their own nitrogen into the soil, which increases soil fertility. The genetic diversity of these crops is an essential component for on-farm soil and pest management, especially for small-scale farmers. Intercropping with pulses increases farm biodiversity and creates a more diverse landscape for animals and insects.

IV. Recommendations

14. Member States should continue the activities related to the International Year of Pulses and integrate them within the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by recognizing interlinkages with relevant Sustainable Development Goals and their targets and further supporting appropriate actions to achieve them.